

PRABUDDHA BHARATA

or AWAKENED INDIA

A monthly journal of the Ramakrishna Order
started by Swami Vivekananda in 1896



December 2016

Vol. 121, No. 12

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THE ROAD TO WISDOM

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA ON

Analysis of Vedanta Philosophy VI

The last are the non-dualists. They raise the question also, that God must be both the material and the efficient cause of this universe. As such, God has become the whole of this universe and there is no going against it. And when these other people say that God is the soul, and the universe is the body, and the body is changing, but God is changeless, the non-dualists say, all this is nonsense. In that case what is the use of calling God the material cause of this universe? The material cause is the cause become effect; the effect is nothing but the cause in another form. Wherever you see an effect, it is the cause reproduced. If the universe is the effect, and the God the cause, it must be the reproduction of God. If you say that the universe is the body of God, and that the body becomes contracted and fine and becomes the cause, and out of that the universe is evolved, the non-dualists say that it is God Himself who has become this universe. Now comes a very fine question. If this God has become this universe, you and all these things are God. Certainly. This book is God, everything is God. My body is God, and my mind is God, and my soul is God. Then why are there so many Jivas? Has God become divided into millions of Jivas? Does that one God turn into millions of Jivas? Then how did it become so? How can that infinite power and substance, the one Being of the universe, become divided? It is impossible to divide infinity. How can that pure Being become this universe? If He



has become the universe, He is changeful, and if He is changeful, He is part of nature, and whatever is nature and changeful is born and dies. If our God is changeful, He must die some day. Again, how much of God has become this universe? If you say X (the unknown algebraical quantity), then God is God minus X now, and, therefore, not the same God as before this creation, because so much has become this universe. So the non-dualists say, 'This universe does not exist at all; it is all illusion. The whole of this universe, these Devas, gods, angels, and all the other beings born and dying, all this infinite number of souls coming up and going down, are all dreams.' There is no Jiva at all. How can there be many? It is the one Infinity. As the one sun, reflected on various pieces of water, appears to be many, and millions of globules of water reflect so many millions of suns, and in each globule will be a perfect image of the sun, yet there is only one sun, so are all these Jivas but reflections in different minds.

From *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, (Kolkata: Advaita Ashrama, 2015), 1.401-403.

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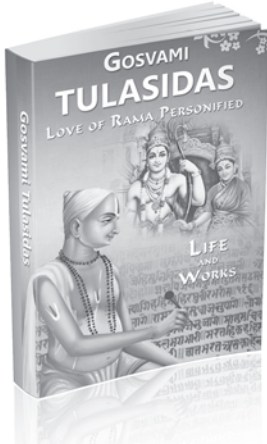


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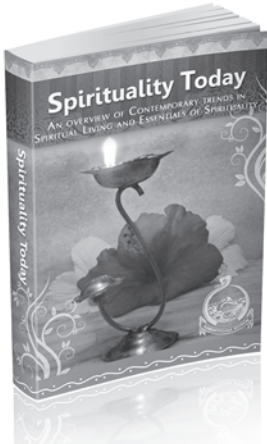
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Arise! Awake! And stop not till the goal is reached!

Maitrayaniya Upanishad

December 2016

Vol. 121, No. 12

मैत्रायणीयोपनिषत्

अथ यथेयं कौत्स्यायनी स्तुतिः ।
त्वं ब्रह्मा त्वञ्च वै विष्णुस्त्वं रुद्रस्त्वं प्रजापतिः ।
त्वमग्निर्वरुणो वायुस्त्वमिन्द्रस्त्वं निशाकरः ।
त्वमन्नस्त्वं यमस्त्वं पृथिवी त्वं विश्वं त्वमथाच्युतः ।
स्वार्थे स्वाभाविकेऽर्थे च बहुधा संस्थितिस्त्वयि ।
विश्वेश्वर नमस्तुभ्यं विश्वात्मा विश्वकर्मकृत् ।
विश्वभृग्विश्वमायुस्त्वं विश्वक्रीडारतिप्रभुः ।
नमः शान्तात्मने तुभ्यं नमो गुह्यतमाय च ।
अचिन्त्यायाप्रमेयाय अनादिनिधनाय च ।

॥५.१॥

*Atha yathayam kautsyayani stutih. Tvam brahma tvancha vai vishnustvam rudrastvam prajapati-
tib. Tvamagnir-varuno vayustvamindrastvam nishakarah. Tvamannastvam yamastvam prithivi
tvam vishvam tvamathachyutah. Svarthe svabhavike'rthe cha bahudha sansthitistvayi. Vishvesh-
vara namastubhyam vishvatma vishvakarmakrit. Vishvabhug-vishvamayustvam vishvakridarati-
prabhuh. Namah shantatmane tubhyam namo guhyatamaya cha. Achintyayaprameyaya anadi-
nidhanaya cha.*

(5.1)

Now this is Kutsayana's hymn. You are Brahma, you indeed are Vishnu, you are Rudra, and you are Prajapati. You are Agni, you are Varuna, Vayu, you are Indra, you are the moon. You are food, you are Yama, you are the earth, you are the universe, and you are the imperishable. All things abide in you for their own ends or for their natural ends. Salutations to the Lord of the universe, the self of all, the maker of all, the experiencer of all, you are all life and the Lord of all pleasure and delight. Salutations to you, the tranquil self, salutations to you, the deeply hidden, the incomprehensible, the immeasurable, the beginningless, and the endless. (5.1)

THIS MONTH

WHAT IS THE PLACE of gender in discussions on the ultimate reality, the immanent divine principle? Why do we not always see the feminine in the almighty? These and some similar concepts are discussed in **The Divine Feminine**.

Jesus Christ is seen by many persons in many ways. How one approaches this great figure depends much upon one's culture and beliefs. Christ's life has inspired and continues to inspire many to be kind and also to set out in a quest for God. Swami Chetanananda, minister-in-charge of the Vedanta Society of St Louis, talks about Jesus Christ in **What Christ Means to Me**. He discusses sin and purity, ways to know Christ, and compares the Christian way with other religions. Quoting from the Bible, he shows that Christ was a model of renunciation and exhorts us to dedicate ourselves to God in our pursuit to understand our true spiritual nature.

Swami Vivekananda lectured extensively in London and the texts of many of his lectures there have not been discovered yet. Apart from lecturing in various places, he also delivered Sunday sermons in the Free Christian Church in West Croydon. The text of a lecture that was delivered there has been discovered by Diane Marshall, graphic artist and art historian, which is reproduced and analysed in **Swami Vivekananda's Unpublished Lecture at Croydon—'All Saints and All Souls'**.

Alok Dutta, a litterateur, artist, and social activist from Kolkata makes a novel interpretation of the form and symbology of **Kali**. He shows us

how Kali is inextricably linked with Kala, Shiva, or time.

In the eleventh instalment of the edited transcript of a series of lectures on **Mandukya Upanishad** given by Srimat Swami Ranganathanandaji Maharaj, who was the thirteenth president of the Ramakrishna Math and Ramakrishna Mission, religious dogmatism is critiqued and the catholicity of Advaita Vedanta is explained.

Srimat Swami Smarananandaji Maharaj, Vice-President, Ramakrishna Math and Ramakrishna Mission, has been asked various questions regarding various aspects of spiritual life by the young and old alike, over a period of time. The eighth instalment of the collection of such questions and his answers to them is given in **Vedanta Answers**.

Among the many vices that haunt human existence, greed is very powerful and can destroy a wonderful life with many opportunities. This is the moral of the story **Greed That Brought Destruction**. This story is this month's *Traditional Tales* and has been translated from the Tamil book *Arulneri Kathaigal*.

Dallas G Denery II, Associate Professor of history at Bowdoin College, Brunswick, Maine, USA, the author of *Seeing and Being Seen in the Later Medieval World: Optics, Theology, and Religious Life*, and the coeditor of *Uncertain Knowledge: Scepticism, Relativism, and Doubt in the Middle Ages* has written **The Devil Wins: A History of Lying from the Garden of Eden to the Enlightenment**. From this book, we bring you this month's *Manana*.

The Divine Feminine

GOD HAS NO GENDER. God has no form or name. It is for our convenience that we imagine God to be in various names and forms and also in different genders. We have female, male, and transgender conceptions of God. All these conceptions are the creations of human minds. That is why they differ according to the place, time, culture, and world views of the people who conceive them. And since most of the people in this world have a patriarchal mindset; most conceptions of God are patriarchal. Most forms of God are male. The most used pronoun for God is 'he' and it is 'God' and seldom 'Goddess'. This is characteristic of the male aggressive psyche. Even the most docile personality types among males tend to be aggressive towards a female.

Many faith-traditions have at best a secondary place for the female form, irrespective of whether it is divine or human. So, if it is a female human being, she is always secondary to the male human being. If it is a female form of the almighty, the Goddess is always secondary to the male form of the almighty, the God. In many religious traditions women are considered to be inferior and are kept away from places of worship. Their very presence sometimes is considered to defile a place of worship. Ironically, even shrines to goddesses do not have women priests. While it is comforting for many to see a woman praying and crying to God in ultimate despair, most of us cannot accept the idea of a women spiritual guru.

There are some places where the female form

of the almighty is worshipped and adored. There are hymns praising the female form of the Goddess in vivid detail and these hymns are chanted

The divine is feminine, masculine, transgender, and yet beyond all these. Our aim should be to tear the veneer on the ultimate reality and come face-to-face with the gender-free immanence.

every day in many places of worship. It is a different matter that many people chant them mechanically without understanding the meaning of the words of these hymns. However, even in such places the female form is always seen as a distraction to spiritual life. It seems that every spiritual aspirant wants to give a simplistic explanation of the innumerable obstacles to spiritual life by blaming it all on the female gender. This is foolish because the problem is not a particular gender but the pull of the body accentuated by the opposite gender or the gender one's body feels physically attracted to. So, here the culprit is not any particular gender but the instinctual craving for sense-pleasures. Since most people feel physically attracted to the opposite gender, Sri Ramakrishna cautioned his male devotees to beware of women and alerted his female devotees to beware of men. Till the sense of touch acquires sensual tendencies because of biological growth, touch does not disturb the mind. This is the reason why infants are generally not disturbed by a comforting touch, no matter which physical form it comes from.

If God or the ultimate reality is omnipresent and if only that reality is true, then how could a particular gender be inferior to other genders? That cannot be. All such ideas of inferiority of a particular gender are against the concept of immanence of the almighty or the ultimate reality. So, if at all the divine principle has to be referred to in a particular gender, it should be in any gender of the choice of the speaker. But, since the female and the transgender have been neglected for ages, it would make sense, at least for some time, to address the divine principle in the female or transgender genders. We should now, for some centuries, stop talking of God and only talk of Goddess. But, it is not just a gender that has been marginalised by neglecting the female or transgender. It is the whole gamut of dimensions that are integral to these genders that has also been neglected.

For instance, the female gender signifies bearing and birthing. All that creates or gives birth to a new life and all that forbears bring forth the feminine dimension of the immanent divine. The earth is the mother of all. It swallows and assimilates all that is on it and produces food and creates an ecosystem that sustains life on it. Any life has to have three aspects of creation, sustenance, and dissolution. All these three dimensions are manifested in the earth. So, earth in all its femininity can be by itself a fair representation of the ultimate reality. It is only ignorance that leads us to believe that for any living system of this universe to be in balance, there is a need for at least two genders, the female and the male. When gender itself is a superimposition on the ultimate reality, does it matter if there are more than one or if there are no genders? We do see instances of living systems without female and male genders in some lower life-forms and plants.

The feminine gender cannot be restricted to life alone and it pervades the entire universe.

It is also not a great service one does to the female kind if one sees the Goddess in place of God. In recent times, there has been much joy expressed over the so-called 're-emergence' of the divine feminine. This exhilaration at reading the divine as feminine is misplaced. This universe is considered to be a superimposition on the ultimate divine reality. That superimposition is pervaded by that on which it is superimposed. So, different names and forms, and also different genders—all have the same status regarding divinity. On the practical side however, we have to remember that the right to practise religion, individually or socially, by offering individual prayers or by praying in a place of worship, is a right that all human beings have and one cannot be denied this right based on one's gender. That would not only be unjust, it would also reflect the wrong understanding of the true nature of the ultimate divine principle that every religion or faith tradition attempts to follow.

There should be a conscious effort by everyone to bring various genders into active role in the practice of religion. If names, forms, and genders can be active in all their diversity in this play of the universe, why should genders be left out? There should be practitioners of all genders in all religions. There should be gurus of all genders in all religions. Even the scriptures of world religions should be presented in a manner that does not exclude any gender, in practice, precept, or in the language of the scriptures. Spirituality or religion should not be an exercise to exterminate the presence of specific genders but should be an attempt to destroy differentiation out of which all concepts of genders arise. The divine is feminine, masculine, transgender, and yet beyond all these. Our aim should be to tear the veneer on the ultimate reality and come face-to-face with the gender-free immanence.



What Christ Means to Me

Swami Chetanananda

PEOPLE OFTEN SPEAK OF the second coming of Christ. It is interesting to speculate about how many would recognise Christ if he were to appear tomorrow. In many places in the Bible we find that Christ revealed his divinity to those who loved him, who were close to him. Only those who are simple and pure can understand the divinity of God. It is only by God's grace that a woman or man can understand God. The *Katha Upanishad* says: 'That person whom the Atman chooses attains the Atman.'¹

In the Bhagavadgita, Sri Krishna says: 'When religion declines and irreligion prevails, I take a human form. To preserve the eternal religion, I come in every age.'² The Vedantic concept of divine incarnation is that God is birthless, deathless, and infinite, yet takes form from time to time. Sri Ramakrishna said that it is one and the same God who plunges into the ocean of Sat-chidananda, then rises up in one place and is known as Sri Krishna; then, diving again, rises up in another place and is known as Jesus. Out of mercy, divine incarnations take a human form to help humankind.³ When people are no longer practising true religion, the avatar comes. The divine incarnation demonstrates true religion so that we are inspired to perform our duties sincerely and wholeheartedly.

There are some seabirds named the Stormy Petrels that live on the open sea and come to the shore only for breeding. They get on a ship during a storm, not leaving the sea even then. They love storms; they love to fight against them. Like those seabirds, divine incarnations come

to fly against maya and the turmoil of life. The avatars do this because we need a model to show us how to fight our trials and tribulations. We need a divine incarnation to give us strength and understanding.

The experiences of the mystics described in the Upanishads show that God exists, but people do not believe this. When Jesus went to visit his family in Nazareth, the villagers saw him only as the carpenter's son. They did not know who he was. Who can understand and explain Christ? Truly, only Christ can speak about himself; only Christ knows Christ. Acharya Shankara can explain his philosophy better than any other philosopher.

How to Know Christ?

We want to learn more about Christ, but how can we know him better?

In the Gita, Sri Krishna revealed his divine cosmic form to Arjuna. Arjuna was bewildered and afraid. He had not known Sri Krishna in that way: Sri Krishna was his companion, his cousin, and his friend. On that battlefield of Kurukshetra, when Sri Krishna revealed his divine nature, Arjuna said: 'You are that supreme Brahman; you are that supreme reality; you are the abode of all; you are the refuge of all. The great sages and illumined souls spoke about you, and now you speak about yourself. O Lord Krishna, you are speaking about yourself, declaring that you are that Supreme Being. Now I understand who you are.'⁴

Likewise, in the Bible, especially in the Gospel of St John, we find that Christ also disclosed

who he was on many occasions. He revealed the purpose of his coming to the world, his relation to the heavenly Father, and his redemptive relation to humans. He said: 'I came to cast fire upon the earth; and what do I desire, if it is already kindled?'⁵ He meant that the blazing fire cannot be hidden; it will manifest by itself. The spiritual magnetism of the divine avatar cannot be sealed up; it cannot be hidden. Christ said: 'I have come to cast fire.' What type of fire? The light of consciousness. He brought that light to human beings so that they can get rid of ignorance, which is the cause of all pain and suffering. But most people in this world do not want to be rid of ignorance; they are entangled with their worldly attachments. When a divine incarnation such as Christ comes to the world, most people resent him, attack him, and misunderstand him. At last they torture him, because he is revealing the path of light—the path of God.

Christ said: 'I am the way, the truth and the life, and no one comes to the Father but by me. If you had known me, you would have known my Father also. Henceforth you know him and have seen him; I and my Father are one.'⁶

If you know the incarnation of God, you know God. This is a tremendous message from a Vedantic standpoint: 'I and my Father are one.' In Sanskrit we call it '*Aham brahmasmi*; I am Brahman'—the absolute, eternal Godhead.

Christ is an avatar, a divine incarnation—God who took the human form to serve humankind. Christ is the saviour of souls, but who wants to be saved? Sri Krishna told Arjuna that there are four types of people who seek God: Those who are afflicted, those who are curious, those who have desires for wealth, and those who are great lovers.⁷ These four types of people seek God, but God is available only to those who are motivated by love. God fulfils the desires of people according to their own karma.

Sometimes I visualise Christ carrying out his divine play: I imagine him waiting on the sidewalk outside a church. When the service is over, Christ calls out: 'Follow me!' How many would answer that call?

The honest person would say: 'Lord, I am not ready. I have some commitments. I have to fulfil some desires. Please forgive me. I can't answer your call right now.'

The worldly person, who has a calculating mind, would ask: 'Lord, what shall I gain by following you?' Such a person is an utilitarian and wants to know: 'Shall I get a new car, a good job, a beautiful spouse, a big home? Shall I get all these things by following you?'

Our minds are earthbound. We are worldly people, and we evaluate everything by means of our worldly possessions.

Christ might respond: 'I shall give you eternal life.'

The worldly person could counter: 'I shall get that after death, so you need not promise it right now.'

'Well, one who follows me shall not walk in darkness.'

'Lord, I am all right. I have two eyes. I see well enough. I am not falling; I am not stumbling.'

'First seek the kingdom of heaven and everything shall be added unto you.'

The doubting person would not believe Christ. Such a person would think Jesus is trying to trick one: Perhaps he wants to attract people with misleading words.

We do not hear the call of Christ because our minds are engrossed in the world. We are deaf, so we do not answer the call of Christ.

Religion, as preached by Christ, is pure, simple, uplifting, and full of love. The original religion of Jesus was the religion of true Christianity. It had no dogma, no creed, and no theology. It was a religion of the heart, a religion without any

ceremony, without ritual, without priestcraft. It was not based upon any book, but upon the feelings of the heart, upon direct communion of the individual soul with the heavenly Father. That is the way we look at the religion of Christ.

The Jewish religious tradition that preceded it was moribund, bound by the many laws of Moses. When religion is bound by too many laws, customs, and rituals, it does not function properly or breathe freely. Jesus came and removed those barriers so that people could breathe the freshness of the eternal—that is the beauty of his religion. However, in time, doctrines, dogmas, and creeds entered Christ's teachings, and those bound the Christian religion. It is amazing how religion becomes free and again becomes bound. Mystics make religion free, but driven by self-interest, priests and politicians make religion bound. This is the problem of all organised religions.

Once, in the US, a Christian said to Swami Vivekananda: 'If ministers stop preaching hell-fire, they will have no control over their people.'⁸

Swamiji replied: 'They had better lose it then. The man who is frightened into religion has no religion at all. Better teach him of his divine nature than of his animal' (ibid.).

Sin and Purity

In Vedanta, the true nature of human beings is the Atman, which is sinless. Vedanta admits the doctrine of karma: whatever a person sows that shall the person also reap. People make mistakes, and they can correct them. Once a famous Dominican monk in Europe, a holy man, doubted the validity of the Christian doctrine of original sin, and all of Christendom was shaken. Nowadays, some Christians consider sin to be ignorance. Does it help anyone to think, day and night: 'I am a sinner, I am a sinner?' If a person thinks all the time, 'I am sick,

I am sick', she or he will become sick. Instead, say: 'I am the Atman, birthless, deathless, immortal. I am that Self. I am divine because my very nature is divine.'

Christ is the embodiment of purity, renunciation, and love. Who is pure? That person who is free from desires. Did Christ have any desires? He had no desire for himself. His life was completely dedicated to bringing good to humanity.

Christ said: 'Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.'⁹ We have repeated this sentence for the last two thousand years, but we still don't understand it. The Upanishads teach that the mind is of two kinds: pure and impure. The impure mind is possessed of desire and the pure mind is devoid of desire. It is indeed the mind that is the cause of human bondage and liberation. The mind that is attached to sense objects leads to our bondage and the unattached mind leads to liberation.

Spiritual magnetism originates from purity. In several places in the Bible we read that the multitude followed Jesus. Why? Because people could not resist his spiritual attraction. Christ was pure, and they were forced against their will to follow him. This degree of spiritual magnetism comes from purity, and this purity is indestructible.

There is a fabulous story concerning the Buddha. He was so pure that people became illumined just by seeing his face. For this reason, jealous priests wanted to kill him. They went to the Buddha and said: 'Lord, we are looking for a pure spot where we can perform a sacrifice. We have not found any pure spot in this world. You are a pure person, so we want to perform our sacrifice on you.'

The Buddha agreed. He lay down and told them to put the sacrificial wood on his chest. They set the fire, but he was not affected. The priests were astounded.

The Buddha explained: 'Nobody can kill me because I am pure. That purity is indestructible.'

We find that same purity in Christ. He was the purest of the pure. If he had not been pure, he could not have transformed humankind, changing its thought current over the last two thousand years. When he said to a person, 'Be ye whole,' that person became whole instantly. That is the power that comes from divine purity.

The Religion of Renunciation

The religion of Christ is the religion of renunciation. He said: 'Sell whatever you have, and give to the poor, and you shall have treasure in heaven.'¹⁰ He also said: 'Foxes have holes and the birds have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head.'¹¹

This religion is very difficult for ordinary people to follow. It is not suitable or reasonable for everybody to live in a monastery or convent. The important thing for us is that we must sacrifice our ego. We must try to control our desires.

Spiritual power comes through non-attachment. Everything in this world is fraught with fear; non-attachment alone makes one fearless. After Mahatma Gandhi's passing away a photograph was taken of his possessions. He had one pair of glasses, one pocket watch, one pair of wooden sandals, one pair of leather sandals, two bowls, one spoon, a volume of the Gita, one letter opener, and one image of the three famous monkeys: see no evil, hear no evil, speak no evil. Those were his possessions; in that respect, you may call him a beggar. Nonetheless, when that man stood up, millions of people stood up with him, and he brought freedom to India through a non-violent, bloodless revolution. This is the power behind renunciation. This spiritual dynamism, this power comes from a person of renunciation—and only this kind of person can shake the world. We find this power in Christ.

The crucifix is the symbol of the greatest sacrifice one can offer to the world: one's own life. No person can be great without sacrifice. Gandhi sacrificed himself for the nation, and people worship him, adore him. Christ sacrificed his life for the good of humanity, and people worship and adore him. The main thing is how much sacrifice one is willing to make. People draw near a person who has made a great sacrifice.

Christianity and Other Religions

Most Christians think that Christ is only for Christians. This is not true at all. If Christ were only for Christians, then it would mean that God is sectarian. The sun does not belong to a Muslim or a Hindu, a Christian or a Jew. Similarly, God belongs to all. He is infinite. The infinite cannot have parts. God cannot be fragmented. God cannot be sectarian. Jesus Christ came for the entire world, not just for Christians.

The beauty of Vedanta is that it is not limited by any sectarian views. Vedantists adore and respect Christ, Buddha, and Muhammad without any prejudice. They are all embodiments of the Infinite, manifest in human form so that we humans can get some idea of God and God's love. Despite the bad and impure water of his own well, a religious fanatic does not drink pure water from a neighbour of other religion. But a Vedantist, a real Vedantist, can drink good water from anybody's well. Our attitude is that we must learn from any beneficial and uplifting teaching, regardless of where it is from. This is the concept of universal religion.

Swamiji said:

I accept all religions that were in the past, and worship with them all; I worship God with every one of them, in whatever form they worship Him. I shall go to the mosque of the Mohammedan; I shall enter the Christian's church and kneel before the crucifix; I shall enter the

Buddhist temple, where I shall take refuge in Buddha and in his Law. I shall go into the forest and sit down in meditation with the Hindu, who is trying to see the Light which enlightens the heart of everyone. Not only shall I do all these, but I shall keep my heart open for all that may come in the future. Is God's book finished? Or is it still a continuous revelation going on?¹²

Christ brought us the religion of love. His two greatest commandments were: 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength.'¹³ And, 'Love your neighbour as yourself.'¹⁴ He also taught the Golden Rule: 'Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.'¹⁵

In the Gita, Sri Krishna said: 'He who, having been established in oneness, worships Me dwelling in all beings—that yogi, in whatever way he leads his life, lives in Me. Him I hold to be the supreme yogi, O Arjuna, who looks on the pleasure and pain of all beings as he looks on them in himself.'¹⁶

Christ told his disciples: 'Love your enemies. Do good to those who hate you. Bless those who curse you. Pray for those who mistreat you.'¹⁷

The Buddha said in the Dhammapada: 'Never does hatred cease by hatred; hatred ceases by love. This is the eternal law.'¹⁸

When we compare the great sayings of the different divine incarnations, we find there is an echo. They are speaking more or less the same truths using different languages. As Sri Ramakrishna put it: 'All jackals howl alike.'¹⁹ All these great teachers speak in the same way. We need Christ; we need the Buddha; we need Sri Krishna more and more so that we may not forget their life-giving teachings, their words that come from God.

There is a fantastic book, *In the Footsteps of Jesus: a Pilgrimage to the Scenes of Christ's Life*.²⁰ The author has photographed every spot Christ

was ever in. The villages of Nazareth, Bethlehem, Galilee—all are included in that book. The author went to all the places named in the Bible and photographed all the sites of events associated with Christ. This makes the Bible living. The reader can visualise the environment in which Jesus was born and brought up.

Many of Christ's parables and conversations came from his observations of nature. For example, he said: Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow. They neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.'²¹ Christ observed those beautiful lilies on the hillside of Nazareth, so the book includes a photo of a field of lilies. The famous German poet Goethe said: 'If you want to understand a poet you must visit his country.'²² This is true. If we want to have any understanding of Christ, it helps to see his environment and circumstances.

There are nearly four hundred Christian denominations in the US and Canada. Each denomination emphasises a particular aspect of Christ. Christian Science stresses the healing aspect. Other denominations emphasise how Christ cleared the moneychangers from the temple. Many denominations, both Protestant and Catholic, emphasise the Last Supper, in which Christ gave his disciples bread and said: 'This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of Me.' He then gave them wine and said: 'This cup is the new covenant in My blood; do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.'²³ Some denominations emphasise sin and redemption; others emphasise self-mortification. Still others emphasise Christ's miracles. Each denomination is emphasising a particular aspect of Jesus; in that way they are worshipping Christ.

In the Louvre Museum in Paris, I saw an exquisite painting of Jesus as a little boy with Joseph. Joseph is drilling a hole in a piece of



*Christ in the Carpenter's Shop by Georges de la Tour (1645)
which Hangs in the Musée du Louvre, Paris.*

wood and Jesus is holding a candle, protecting it. The light illuminates his face and body.²⁴ I loved to see Christ helping his earthly father in his carpentry work. I also love to see Christ struggling against the temptations of Satan. He fasted for forty days and nights, and he conquered maya. I love to see Christ near the seashore, on the hill, in the meadow, and in the desert. I love to see Christ's tears. His heart melted for the poor, for the fallen, for the downtrodden. I love to see Christ steeped

in divine communion at night under the olive tree.

I love to see the compassionate Christ near a temple in Galilee. When the people were about to stone a fallen woman to death, one sentence from Christ saved her life: 'Let the person among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her.'²⁵ That sentence pricked the conscience of the mob and they left.

Jesus then asked her: 'Woman, where are those your accusers? Has no man condemned you?'

She answered: 'No one, Lord.'

Then he assured her, saying: 'I do not condemn you, either. Go. From now on sin no more' (8:10-11).

This a great message of the gospel of hope for the fallen; it is a gospel of hope and strength. Any person who hears the voice of Christ saying, 'Go and sin no more', will get tremendous inner strength and will feel that it is the Lord who has taken responsibility

for her or him, who is protecting her or him, who has saved her or his very life! That person will be filled with the conviction that she or he must follow what Christ has commanded. That person may have fallen, but it does not matter. That person has been sanctified and will live in God.

Forgiveness is divine. St Augustine said: 'I searched in vain outside to find you when in reality you were within me. I searched for you in public places, in the cities of the world. I did not find you. I searched for you outside, when you were inside.'²⁶

Christ is the Perfect Model

In our Vedanta class, our teacher always used to say: ‘Put the responsibility on yourself. Don’t say that this man is ignorant; that man is bad; that man is this or that. See your own ignorance; see that you yourself are trapped by maya, and then try to get free of it.’


Christ scolded the priests whom he exposed as hypocrites. When we read about this, we should try taking those scoldings on ourselves, as if Jesus were pointing to us. If there is any hypocrisy in our nature, we must immediately try to get rid of it. Don’t say that someone else is ignorant. Say that *you* are ignorant. If you are pure, how can you see impurity in others? If you are illumined, how can you see darkness in others? Remember that whatever is inside, we are projecting outside. That is the position of Vedanta. Jesus Christ was pure and perfect, and he wanted us to be pure and perfect.

Seekers of God need a spiritual model to follow. The deepest question for a seeker of God is whom to follow. For that reason, in the Vedantic tradition a great deal of emphasis is placed on having a Chosen Ideal, an ideal Spiritual Soul. Christ said: ‘Be you therefore perfect, even as your Father who is in heaven is perfect.’²⁷ The life and teachings of a spiritual model can help one to overcome temptation.

Nikos Kazantzakis, the famous Greek writer, mentioned in the prologue of his famous book *The Last Temptation of Christ*:

This book was written because I wanted to offer a supreme model to the man who struggles. I wanted to show him that he must not fear pain, temptation or death—because all three can be conquered, all three have already been conquered. Christ suffered pain, and since then pain has been sanctified. Temptation fought until the very last moment to lead him astray, and Temptation was defeated. Christ died on the cross, and at that instant death was vanquished forever. Every obstacle in his journey became a

milestone, an occasion for further triumph. We have a model in front of us now, a model who blazes our trail and gives us strength.²⁸

If you want to carry the Lord in your heart, be strong, be pure, be selfless, and dedicate yourself to the Lord. 

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4. See Gita, 11.36–46.
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Swami Vivekananda's Unpublished Lecture at Croydon—'All Saints and All Souls'

Diane Marshall

WHILE SWAMI VIVEKANANDA was living in London in 1896, he spoke five times at the Free Christian Church in West Croydon.¹ These were on November 8, 15, 22, 29, and 6 December. The most significant fact about these events is that they were not merely lectures; they were full Sunday morning sermons. Swamiji spoke many times in churches—most of them were Unitarian—but he usually spoke in the evening or afternoon. To speak on Sunday morning meant that he was not merely lecturing on a topic—he was providing the worship. Pastors did not surrender their Sunday worship duty lightly.

The first time Swamiji preached a Sunday morning sermon was on 24 September 1893 at the Third Unitarian in Chicago under Reverend James Vila Blake. Of that occasion Clara Kern Bayliss wrote: 'On Sunday morning we heard Vivekananda preach from the pulpit of a Christian church, such a sermon as might well teach Christians how to love their own God.'² There were a few Sunday morning talks in the wake of the Parliament of Religions. At Hinsdale Unity Church under Reverend A W Gould, he shared the Sunday pulpit twice with other Asian delegates,³ and in Minneapolis, he spoke on Sunday morning, 26 November, at the First Unitarian Society under Reverend Martyn Simmons who was deaf. The only known Sunday morning in 1894 was 28 October at the People's Church in Washington, D C under Reverend Alexander

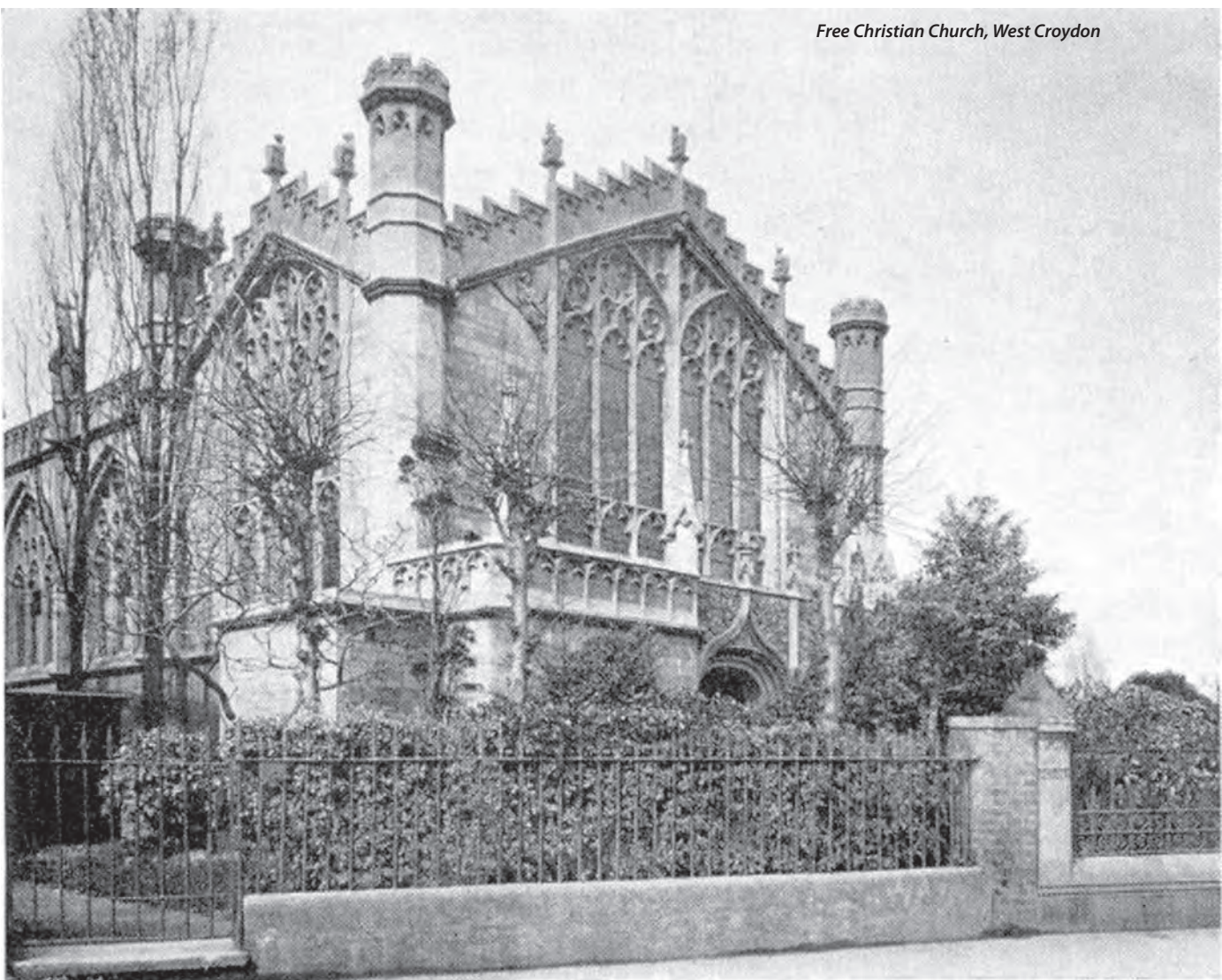
Kent. Swamiji spoke so passionately about God-vision that the next Sunday, Reverend Kent was moved to speak on 'Seeing God', a subject the *Washington Times* said was 'suggested by the address of the Brahmin monk, Vive Kananda.'⁴ In the morning of Sunday, 10 November 1895, he spoke at the South Place Chapel, London under Moncure Conway. This honour no doubt factored into his invitation to the Free Christian Church in Croydon in 1896. This time, Swamiji was offered an unprecedented five Sunday mornings in a row to elevate the hearts and minds of the congregation there.

The extraordinary pastor who allowed him such freedom was Reverend John Page Hopps (1834–1911). Page Hopps was minister of the Free Christian Church from 1892 to 1903. He was sixty-two years old when he met Swamiji, and he had already led a very unconventional career. He seems to have had an upbeat and enthusiastic disposition.⁵ His seminary education and first ministerial assignment began conservatively within the Baptist denomination, but early in his career, during the 1860s, he sought more liberal territory—possibly due to an encounter with spiritualism. Between 1863 and 1887 Page Hopps published a spiritualist periodical with the telling title, *Truthseeker*.⁶ He apparently shed a lot of theological baggage and adopted progressive causes when he joined the Unitarian ministry. His zeal spread across the Atlantic. From Chicago, *Unity and the University* wrote in

1886: 'Our friend John Page Hopps, editor of the *Truthseeker*, Leicester, England, is an indefatigable tract-maker. A bundle of his latest has come to hand.'⁷ His most notable assignments before coming to London were in Glasgow and Leicester.⁸ In Glasgow, he became involved in educational politics, sitting on the Glasgow School Board in 1873 and advocating for secular state-aided schools. In Leicester, in 1876, he directed an outreach program for working class people at Floral Hall, a skating rink, through preaching and music. Page Hopps wrote lyrics for hymns and compiled several hymn collections.⁹ He advocated cremation—which was a theologically radical rejection of the doctrine of resurrection

of the body. He frequently voiced political opinions that were at odds with his Leicester congregants, such as support for Irish Home Rule. Eventually he parted with this congregation and moved to London where he became pastor of the Free Christian Church on Wellesley Road in West Croydon.

On 1 July 1896, *The Guardian* noted that he attended a rally for the release of Irish political prisoners at St James Hall, Piccadilly—raising the question as to whether Margaret Noble, Sister Nivedita, knew Page Hopps through Irish activism.¹⁰ There are at least two other mutual acquaintances who may have introduced Page Hopps to Swamiji. One was Dr Stanton



Free Christian Church, West Croydon

Coit. Swamiji had met Coit through Josephine MacLeod on 1 November 1895 and he subsequently lectured to the South Place Ethical Society founded by Coit.¹¹ Page Hopps was united with Coit in the cause of secularising education in state-run schools.¹² The second mutual acquaintance was J Estlin Carpenter whom Swamiji met in Plymouth on 13 August 1894. Page Hopps and Carpenter were co-lecturers for the second series of McQuaker Trust Lectures given in Scotland in 1892.¹³

The title of Page Hopps's McQuaker Lecture, 'The Incarnations of God', concerns the Unitarian position that God is immanent throughout the universe, that generally there are millions of incarnations, and that particularly Jesus was not the *only* incarnation.¹⁴ He stated: 'God is as incarnate in a crust as in a Christ' (79). However well Page Hopps lays out his rational Unitarian beliefs, his enlightened theology pales in a burst of protest at conventional Christianity. His real passion was social justice:

We pity the poor "idolater", the poor "pagan" of today, and send out missionaries to convert and save him; but are we, then, supernaturally superior, with our survivals,—our Calvinisms and Catholicisms, our crude representations of God as a man, our bloody sacrifice on the cross, our belief that the first person in the Trinity can be made placable by the murder of the second, our conversion of bread and wine into the body and blood of God, our shocking invention of an eternal fiery Hell? (75).

At heart Page Hopps was more of an activist than a mystic. Although Page Hopps was no doubt impressed by the universal scope of Swamiji's philosophy of Vedanta, he was fired up by the political cause for Indian independence. After the turn of the century Page Hopps wrote at least four articles for *The Modern Review* in Calcutta.¹⁵ One article was an address he

made to the Brahmo Samaj in London in 1908 in which he advised:

What India needs is the following up of its sense of the universality of the divine inspiration and guidance; ... a Religion which fully recognizes the universal Brotherhood, just as the Vedantists, like the late Swami Vivekananda, recognized the universal Inspiration, and the profound truths which are common to all religions and find their justification, not because they are written in a book, but because they belong to the universal divine spirit and the universal human soul.¹⁶

Apparently Swamiji introduced Swami Abhedananda to Page Hopps. After Swamiji's passing Page Hopps addressed Abhedananda as 'Swamiji' (199).¹⁷ He remained a firm friend of India.

We have such a fixed idea of Swamiji as a powerful orator and leader, a man always in the forefront, that it seems out-of-place to picture him sitting in the pews of Christian churches just listening to the worship service. Yet because he was so often a guest, it must have transpired that many times he politely sat with his hosts amongst their congregation. This is mentionable because not only did Swamiji have a natural gift for preaching, he also had a very experienced ear. He had heard many of Christianity's best preachers—and possibly some of its most mediocre, as well.

Anticipating that for the morning worship a scriptural reading was traditional, the following exchange between Swamiji and Page Hopps is quite interesting. Asim Chaudhuri found this announcement from the Free Christian Church newsletter for November 1896: 'The Hindoo, Swami Vivekananda will speak in the Church on Sunday morning, November 8th. Asked for his subject, the reply is: "You say that on the 1st you will speak on the saying in the Old Testament—'As I live, saith the Lord God, all souls are mine.'

I will produce the same text from the Sanskrit, and speak upon it, and also upon the universality of the idea."¹⁸

At present it is not certain if the sermon reproduced here, with the title 'All Saints and All Souls', which was first published in January 1897, is the same sermon that was based upon the Old Testament verse above, but it could be. The scripture seems to be a condensation of two verses: 'As I live, saith the Lord GOD, ye shall not have occasion any more to use this proverb in Israel. Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: the soul that sinneth, it shall die.'¹⁹

Swamiji, therefore begins with a quote from the Bhagavadgita: 'They all are coming through my path, O Arjuna; none can go beyond that, for I am the Lord.'²⁰ He paraphrased this verse in different lectures, such as 'Krishna' given in California on 1 April 1900: 'None can go a day out of my path. All have to come to me. Who-soever wants to worship in whatsoever form, I give him faith in that form, and through that I meet him.'²¹

Swamiji then follows the Gita text with a verse from the *Shiva Mahimna Stotra*, which he quoted many times: 'As various rivers, taking their start from different mountains, running straight or crooked, at last come unto the ocean, so all these various sects, taking their start from different points of view, at last come unto Thee' (4.178).²²

Later in the sermon, Swamiji quotes from the Bible: 'God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands.'²³

The idea that God lives in a temple not made with hands is an extremely important New Testament text, and it is significant to have Swamiji's commentary on it.

JJ Goodwin wrote to Sara Bull after Swamiji's



Reverend John Page Hopps (1834–1911)

first Sunday sermon—which he said had gone very well—that 'The Croydon sermon is being printed by [the church?].'²⁴ Page Hopps did indeed print at least one of Swamiji's sermons in *The Coming Day*, a monthly periodical that he edited from 1891 until 1911 (ibid.). The assurance from Goodwin that the lecture was being printed meant, perhaps, that he had handed his precious stenographic notes directly to Page Hopps. The punctuation and sentence flow may seem slightly different from other lectures in the *Complete Works*, indicating minor editorial influence. The published version takes only twenty-five minutes to read aloud, so it is possible that

ALL SAINTS AND ALL SOULS.

Spoken at Croydon by Swāmi Vivekānanda.

KRISHNA says in the sacred book of the Hindus, the *Gita*, 'They all are coming through my path, oh Arjuna; none can go beyond that, for I am the Lord.'

We read again in the Hindoo scriptures—

'As various rivers, taking their start from different mountains, running straight or crooked, at last come unto the ocean, so all these various sects, taking their start from different points of view, at last come unto Thee.'

This idea has been known from the most ancient times. We read it again and again in the oldest scriptures, especially of the East. Again and again we find attempts all over the world, so to say, to bring it into practice. But there are certain difficulties in the way, and that is why more do not live up to the feeling of oneness all over the world. It is very hard to understand that that which appears to be contradictory may, at the same time, be true: that there may be various roads by which to go to the same place. We find even among those who are thoroughly convinced of the truth of all the religions, when left to their own choice, that they will select only those points from these religions which they like, and that which they do not like they will reject without mercy: and perhaps that which they want to reject is the very heart's blood of those who believe in it. The one difficulty, therefore, is to understand the relativity of truth.

God is the Absolute, the One Truth of the Universe, the one intricate Truth. Besides God, all things are merely related to each other. The existence of God alone is true existence. Everything else exists by relation to others. God exists by His own nature. This book exists in relation to something else. The wall exists in relation to the benches; man exists in relation to beasts and other animals. Now, in this relative world of ours, truth can be more or less expressions of that one reality behind, and it may be that one position is a

little weaker than the other. It may be that one is the childhood of truth, the other the youth, and the other the old age. But just as the child, the young man and the old man are but different manifestations of the one phenomenon of manhood, so these religions are different expressions, related to each other and to that one great truth. This is to be understood.

Generally, we find men become horrified at hearing of others doing that which they do not do. This is so all over the world. It requires a good deal of education, and a greater amount of personal experience, to understand what is meant by sympathising with each other. That has been the ideal for thousands of years; centuries before the birth of the Christian era, centuries before the birth of the Hebrew or the Buddhistic religion, the idea was working in the world, and yet, down to the present time, we have not approached very much towards it. There is another and a deeper reason behind, and that is in the very cause of religions being, not only the relation between man and man, but in an intenser sense, the relation between man and God. The more one goes to the external, the more must be the variation, and the deeper we go to the internal, the more we approach the one-ness. The more we go towards the leaves and the branches, the number will increase; and the more we go towards the root the more we approach unity. God is that Unity of all existence. The nearer we are to Him, the nearer we are to each other; and the farther we are from Him the farther we are from each other. That being the fact, the only way to come to this unity of things is by approaching God. You may call God by various names; there is no use in quarrelling about names. You may call Him 'The Personal God'; you may call Him 'The Almighty,' if you please; or you may call Him 'The Ideal,' if you please; or 'The Absolute,' if you please; or, as in later days scientific theorists call Him, 'The Matter of the Universe,' or 'The Force of the Universe.' Names do not signify much after all. But the fact is, He is the Unity, the basis behind everything, the background of the phenomena of nature, and the more we approach to that, the more shall we

Page Hopps cut part of it. This leads one to wonder if Swamiji, in his discussion of 'the soul of our souls,' expounded on the Atman, and Page Hopps considered the Sanskrit term too esoteric for his periodical—although there were few concepts too esoteric for Page Hopps himself. Even so, 'All Saints and All Souls' still retains Swamiji's immediacy and oratorical cadence. He emerges from these long overlooked pages with the freshness and vitality that captivated so many souls over a century ago. The lecture is reproduced below:

Krishna says in the sacred book of the Hindus, the *Gita*, 'They all are coming through my path, oh Arjuna; none can go beyond that, for I am the Lord.'

We read again in the Hindoo scriptures—

'As various rivers, taking their start from different mountains, running straight or crooked, at last come unto the ocean, so all these various sects, taking their start from different points of view, at last come unto Thee.'

This idea has been known from the most ancient times. We read it again and again in the oldest scriptures, especially of the East. Again and again we find attempts all over the world, so to say, to bring it into practice. But there are certain difficulties in the way, and that is why more do not live up to the feeling of oneness all over the world. It is very hard to understand that that which appears to be contradictory may, at the same time, be true: that there may

understand each other, and the nearer we shall be to each other.

This is what is meant by realisation of religion. Here is a fact, that although there have been so many quarrels between religions and sects, so much heart-burning and jealousy, and abusing of each other, in the different religions of the world, although this earth of ours has been deluged in blood again and again in the name of religion, and although we know that in the hearts of the best of us this fanaticism never dies out—the tiger living inside us, the demon coming up in the name of religion to deluge the earth in blood—yet even in these very religions, even the sects which delight in blood, which delight in persecuting and burning those who do not believe with them, we find persons—solitary examples they may have been—real souls, trying to realise God in their own hearts, and their words come down to us, and we find that they have been singularly unanimous, whether the monk from India, or the mystic from the forests of India, or the saint from the Roman Catholic monastery, or from the monastery of Thibet, we find, wherever these men are, all believe in the manifestation of God in everything, we find that wonderful thought existing all along among them. They are as one in declaring that the same God exists everywhere, that all religions were inspired by Him, that His inspiration did not stop at some past time, nor that there ever will come a time when it will stop. They also declare that persons to whom these messages are given are not even a few. It is a state of things, a place to which all of us must rise. They have declared that religion not only consists in doing good to our fellow beings, in building hospitals, in doing charitable works, but, over and above all these, religion consists in feeling, seeing God.

It has been said that out of the fulness of the heart the mouth speaketh. But it is also true that out of the fulness of the heart the hands work, the feet move, and the whole organisation of the body works. It is the mind that works the body. We shall have to feel first, nay, something higher—see. If there is any truth in religion, we shall here find agreement between all the religions of the world.

How do you know the truth of this thing you preach? All of them declare they saw. Paul says he saw Christ, and that was his authority. Christ says he saw God, and that was his authority. Moses said he saw God, and that was his authority. So do all the prophets and preachers of the world. Only those who try to follow them in after years, attempt to build a wall between the prophets and the taught, just as I have heard some modern Christians say, that only those who have written these books can come in contact with God, and the rest of us never can. The Roman Catholics preach that the miracles which have been worked can only be done through their church. If it is outside it is of the devil. So with all religions, excepting, perhaps, in India. There this doctrine is understood, I believe, much better than anywhere else, for there the first step in religion is to understand that it does not mean that some peculiarly constituted men had some particular or peculiar messages for the world, and there it stopped, but religion consists in everyone of you becoming prophets, and until you become that you are not religious. No amount of argumentation, no amount of hair-splitting, no amount of scientific discussion, no amount of reasoning, and no amount of secondary evidence, will ever satisfy you about the truths of religion until you see them for yourselves direct, until you are conscious of God, until you are conscious of your own soul. And, until you have that, there is no distinction between you or me and the atheist—none at all. All this talk of ours against atheism is all nonsense, simply superstition on our part, and nothing more. The same question will be asked of you as of every other man, and every other prophet in the world:—If you preach God, have you seen Him?

When I was a child that thought struck me first. I used to go to different places, and heard men preach the most beautiful sermons, and when they came down I would ask them, 'Have you seen God?' 'No one can see God.' 'Then how dare you delude mankind? How dare you lead mankind into hazy things?' If there is a God, He should be realisable more than this table before me. He through whom we exist, how much

be various roads by which to go to the same place. We find even among those who are thoroughly convinced of the truth of all the religions, when left to their own choice, that they will select only those points from these religions which they like, and that which they do not like they will reject without mercy: and perhaps that which they want to reject is the very heart's blood of those who believe in it. The one difficulty, therefore, is to understand the relativity of truth.

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Generally, we find men become horrified at hearing of others doing that which they do

more must He exist than our feelings, or our senses? That is the one question we have to ask for ourselves, and we have to remember that there is no difference whatsoever between the rankest Materialist and ourselves, until the difference is made by perception, actual realisation. If there is any difference it is in this, that the Materialist is sincere; he confesses what he feels, and we are hypocrites, bound down by our own superstition. Born cowards we are, dare not speak the truth. And therefore it is necessary that we must struggle and try for that realisation, and we shall find that the more we go towards that the less will be the fight. Dogmas and doctrines will vanish, churches will crumble in the dust, old creeds and sanctions living inside old creeds will vanish into the air, and we shall begin to approach our freedom and true religion. The soul will find that there is truth in religion apart from priests, apart from ceremonies, apart from creeds and dogmas. Not only so, it will find that religion was calling upon us all the time, and we would not hear its voice, because we had built a wall between God's voice and ourselves, because we had built a wall in the form of dogmas, and creeds, and organisations, and intricate ceremonies, and all that. These are all walls between us and God's voice; and we shall learn, when we have pulled these aside, to stand apart, brave, free; there shall be nothing between my God and me. The ever present entity in the human soul will be realised, and with that realisation will come realisation, in the true sense of the word, of the brotherhood of mankind.

We hear so much talk in these days about the brotherhood of mankind, without a God. It has been taken for granted by many persons that there is no use for a God, that the brotherhood of mankind is sufficient. We are going about with each other; that is enough. They do not know. How can you have a brotherhood of mankind excepting from that Unity? How can I feel any sympathy with you until I know that you and I are one? I am a dark man, you are white. You dress one way and I dress another. You speak one language and I another. Our food, dress, everything is different from yours. Where is this unity

then? Not in man! In brotherhood of man you do not find the unity. As soon as you say 'man' there is no brotherhood; you must go deeper to find it, and that Unity is God. And when we have reached that it is only in and through God that we find brotherhood. Leave God aside and man has become your enemy, not your brother. Therefore the one ideal which we should never forget is that in and through God alone we can see the reality of the universe, the reality of mankind; our love, our sympathy, everything will be true only in and through God. Leave God aside and the whole building falls to the ground, crumbles into pieces, and, in spite of the little sentimentalism of certain modern philosophers, for which they have never advanced any reason,—reason will make their theories vanish into the air,—there will be no more a brotherhood of mankind; for, if there is no God, there is no Oneness,—because you must remember that is what I mean by God. The essential idea is that we are all one, human beings and animals; every particle of matter, every atom, is like a point at one end of the radii, and, as you go along, all these radii converge and meet at one centre, the heart, the soul of this universe, the soul of this world, the soul of our souls, the soul of your soul and my soul. Just as the body finds its unity—the body is a changing mass containing different parts which are constantly changing; yet there is something behind it where there is unity, and that is the soul of man. Again, all these souls are various changing quantities, the world of thought going on revolving day and night, good succeeding bad, and bad succeeding good. Yet behind all these different souls there is another unity which never changes, the never dying, the never decaying, the almighty, the omniscient, and that unity is God, the soul of your soul, and of my soul. And, as such, we are one.

If you take away that centre, the keystone of the arch, the arch falls to pieces, and you cannot establish a brotherhood of man. You have no plea for sympathy or love, no plea for helping each other. The only way would be to follow the dictates of nature, cheating each other, which un-

not do. This is so all over the world. It requires a good deal of education, and a greater amount of personal experience, to understand what is meant by sympathising with each other. That has been the ideal for thousands of years; centuries before the birth of the Christian era, centuries before the birth of the Hebrew or the Buddhistic religion, the idea was working in the world, and yet, down to the present time, we have not approached very much towards it. There is another and a deeper reason behind, and that is in the very cause of being, not only the relation between man and man, but in an intenser sense, the relation between man and God. The more one goes to the external, the more must be the variation, and the deeper we

go to the internal, the more we approach the one-ness. The more we go towards the leaves and the branches, the number will increase; and the more we go towards the root the more we approach unity. God is that Unity of all existence. The nearer we are to Him, the nearer we are to each other; and the farther we are from Him the farther we are from each other. That being the fact, the only way to come to this unity of things is by approaching God. You may call God by various names; there is no use in quarreling about names. You may call Him 'The Personal God;' you may call Him 'The Almighty,' if you please; you may call Him 'The Ideal,' if you please; or 'The Absolute,' if you please; or, as in later days scientific theorists call Him, 'The

fortunately the large proportion of mankind follow. Thus, from the Eastern books, the West may well take up that one ideal, that the ideal of brotherhood, the ideals of sympathy and love and help, can only be gained first by feeling the ideal of freedom.

You have just heard read from your own gospel, 'He dwells not in a temple made with hands,' and that is all true. We have to take that in its truest significance, that the only temple in which He lives is the human soul and nothing else. Light is everywhere; we know that the vibrations of light somehow or other, to a certain extent, exist in the darkest places. Yet for us human beings we can see it only in the lamps, and nowhere else. So we know that God is omnipresent, but in mankind He can only be seen in the human soul and nowhere else. It is very good to say we can see God in the sun, and moon, and stars, and everywhere else, but that is afterwards. The beauty of seeing God in nature is only possible to the man who has first seen Him in his own heart, and not before. If God were visible in nature, always, then this book would see God, but we know it cannot, for it has not a soul. It is through the soul we see Him first, and then in nature. It is the human soul, therefore, that is the only temple, and here we have to go to worship the true God. Churches and ceremonies may help the childhood of mankind, but we must grow. It is very good to be born in a church, but it is very bad to die in a church. That shows there has been no growth for the man, no growth towards liberty. Born with limitations, cramped all through life, he dies in limitations. Let us bless all the churches and temples and forms that ever existed as good for our childhood, let them be there, but we have to pass beyond them, and the sooner the better, because we know that the realisation of God can only be in the soul of man.

To look for God anywhere else, even in the heavens, would be useless. We cannot see Him in heaven, for heaven, if it exists at all, cannot be omnipresent. Here, therefore, in the temple of all temples, which was never built by human hands, the temple as eternal as its object of wor-

ship, the eternal God Himself; the temple without beginning and without end; the temple which is pure by its nature; the temple of which immortality is the birthright, the human soul, let us try to see the Lord, and then we shall see Him everywhere, not only in the good places of nature, but in the bad places too. We shall be able to see Him not only in the merciful man, but in the most diabolical man. We shall be able to see Him not only in the innocent dove, but also in the ferocious tiger, for the heart of all hearts will have opened unto us. These veils that are keeping us from the full realisation of God will have vanished, everything, as it were, will have explained its mystery. Then alone nature will have given up her secret, towards which we are only working bit by bit through the various sciences,—and that is, that this very nature is merely a veil, and behind that is the eternal, the ever pure, the ever blissful, the ever intelligent Almighty God of this universe.

RIGHTEOUSNESS OVER-MUCH.

'Be not righteous over much; neither make thyself over wise: why shouldest thou destroy thyself? Be not over much wicked, neither be thou foolish: why shouldest thou die before thy time?'—Ecclesiastes vii. 16-17.

To a certain extent, this Book of Ecclesiastes is a doubter's book, a sceptic's book, a pessimist's book, a cynic's book. The writer of it likes to shew his blasé contempt for the world with its baby love of pleasure, its feverish ambition, its hot haste for this or that object of desire: he half mocks, half sighs as he looks out on the game of life, and sees how the puppets dance: he is melancholy, bitter, satirical, pathetic, and you are never quite sure what he is or what mood he is in, or how much he believes, or how far he means what he says.

Occasionally, however, we get a glimpse of the genuine philosopher, and of the rock on which the whole thing is based.

Matter of the Universe,' or 'The Force of the Universe.' Names do not signify much after all. But the fact is, He is the Unity, the basis behind everything, the background of the phenomena of nature, and the more we approach to that, the more shall we understand each other, and the nearer we shall be to each other.

This is what is meant by realisation of religion. Here is a fact, that although there have been so many quarrels between religions and sects, so much heart-burning and jealousy, and abusing of each other, in the different religions of the world, although this earth of ours has been deluged in blood again and again in the name of religion, and although we know that in the hearts of the best of us this fanaticism never

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It has been said that out of the fulness of the heart the mouth speaketh. But it is also true that out of the fulness of the heart the hands work, the feet move, and the whole organisation of the body works. It is the mind that works the body. We shall have to feel first, nay, something higher—see. If there is any truth in religion, we shall here find agreement between all the religions of the world. How do you know the truth of this thing you preach? All of them declare they saw. Paul says he saw Christ, and that was his authority. Christ says he saw God, and that was his authority. Moses said he saw God, and that was his authority. So do all the prophets and preachers of the world. Only those who try to follow them in after years, attempt to build a wall between the prophets and the taught, just as I have heard some modern Christians say, that only those who have written these books can come in contact with God, and the rest of us never can. The Roman Catholics preach that the miracles which have been worked can only be done through their church. If it is outside it is of the devil. So with all religions, excepting, perhaps, in India. There this doctrine is understood, I believe, much better than anywhere else, for there the first step in religion is to understand that it does not mean that some peculiarly constituted men had some particular or peculiar messages for the world, and there it stopped, but religion consists in everyone of you becoming prophets, and until you become

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Notes and References

1. See Marie Louise Burke, *Swami Vivekananda in the West: New Discoveries*, 6 vols (Calcutta: Advaita Ashrama, 1985), 4.476.
2. CKB, *Sterling Standard*, 28 September 1893.
3. Records do not specify Sunday morning, but it seems to be implied.
4. 'Real Goodness is Divine', *Washington Times*, 5 November 1894, 6.
5. See *Westminster Budget*, 24 December 1896, 33.
6. See John Page Hopps, *Spirit-life in God the Spirit: A Meditation on God and Immortality*, (London: Williams and Norgate, 1868), 39.
7. *Unity and the University*, 17/19 (Chicago: 10 July 1886), 271.
8. See R K Webb, 'John Page Hopps', *Oxford National Dictionary of Biography*, ed. Prof. Sir David Cannadine (Oxford: Oxford University, 2004) <<http://www.oxforddnb.com/index/49/101049458/>> accessed 10 October 2016.
9. See 'John Page Hopps' <http://www.hymnary.org/person/Hopps_JP> accessed 10 October 2016.
10. See *The Guardian*, London, 1 July 1896, 14.
11. The South Place Chapel was built in 1822 and Coit renamed its Unitarian South Place Religious Society the South Place Ethical Society in 1888, and in this respect was considered its founder. Burke has pointed out that Coit was otherwise engaged when Swamiji spoke at South Place Chapel. See *New Discoveries*, 3.261.
12. See *The Guardian*, London, 22 December 1897, 12.
13. J Estlin Carpenter, Principal of Harris Manchester College, Oxford was mentored by James Martineau, the preceding Principal. Martineau had been instrumental in establishing and naming the Free Christian Church in Croydon in 1870. See 'History', *Croydon Unitarians*

- <<http://www.croydonunitarians.org.uk/history.html>> accessed 10 October 2016.
14. Philip H Wicksteed, J Estlin Carpenter, John Page Hopps, *McQuaker Trust Lectures, Second Series* (London: British and Foreign Unitarian Association, 1893) <<https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=hvd.ah4ltj;view=rup;seq=7>> accessed 10 October 2016.
 15. See 'Indian Nationality', *The Modern Review*, 3/3; 'The Stiffening of Congress', 4/2; 'British Egotism', 4/4; 'Alfred Russell Wallace on the Indian Crisis', 3/2.
 16. 'Indian Nationality', *The Modern Review*, 3/3, 198. An address given to the Brahmo Samaj at Essex Hall, London, 25 January 1908.
 17. Page Hopps praised Swami Abhedananda for a speech he made in Madras and quoted someone else addressing him as Swamiji, but he would not have done so without agreeing with its appropriateness.
 18. Asim Chaudhuri, *Swami Vivekananda in England and Continental Europe: New Findings* (Kolkata: Advaita Ashrama, 2015), 192.
 19. Ezekiel 18:3–4.
 20. Gita, 4.11.
 21. *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, 9 vols (Calcutta: Advaita Ashrama, 1–8, 1989; 9, 1997), 1.440.
 22. Swami Saradananda translates the same text as: 'Like the waters of the different rivers flowing through straight or winding paths and mingling with the ocean, losing all name and form, they all meet in Him who is the One ocean of light and love.' *Proceedings at the Annual Meeting of the Free Religious Association, Vol. 26* (Boston: Free Religious Association, 1894), 361. <<https://books.google.com/books/reader?id=8iwNAAAAYAAJ&printsec=frontcover&output=reader&pg=GBS.RA4-PA22>> accessed 10 October 2016.
 23. Acts 17:24.
 24. *New Discoveries*, 4.476; Note 73.

Interior of the Free Christian Church, West Croydon



Kali

Alok Dutta

SOMEONE TOLD ME ONCE: 'Just like you need a lawyer to fight your case in a court, you need a priest to argue your case with God.' My humble reply was: 'But, you don't need a mediator when you argue with your parents. They naturally understand their children and definitely understand their language.'

And, if God is truly your parent, then your relationship with God is a relationship of love. There exists nobody and nothing between the parents and their children; there could not exist anything. There is devotion but not out of fear. It is a devotion absorbed in love. Sri Ramakrishna has shown this through his life and teachings. At least, that is what I have gathered.

I love Mother Kali. That is why I see her from a son's perspective. Kala means time and Kali is the controller of time. Just like *dhana* means wealth and *dhani* means wealthy. I am born in this 'time' and the controller of time, Kali, has given birth to me. Kala and Kali are inseparable. That is why in Kali's altar, both are present. Kali is the coming together of creation, sustenance, and destruction and Kala denotes their co-existence. The one, who gives birth, sustains too. That is why creation and sustenance are her responsibilities. And one who has birth has merging also. She merges in the chest of Kala. I intentionally did not use the word 'death'. In fact, nothing dies. That which is non-existent, exists in history.

Because Kala and Kali are inseparable, to love Kali, one has to know Kala. Kali puts out her tongue so that she would understand and experience Kala through taste, smell, sound, sight,

and touch; that is why she keeps her nose, ears, eyes, and the entire body open. She also sees Kala through her heart and altar. That is why her third eye in the forehead is open—it is the symbol of the vision of heart and knowledge.

Let us understand time. It is constantly flowing. A poet has said: 'Time flows by the river current.' Time constantly comes from the past, touches the present, and runs after the future. The sky, air, planets, and stars are all witnesses to this. The human being can only indicate time to some extent through units like second, minute, hour, day, week, month, year, and so on. The vast can be measured. The human being has measured the highest peak, the Mount Everest, the seabed, and also the speed of light, which is 1,86,282 miles per second. Further, even for measuring great distances, the human being has combined the speed of light with time and created a unit called the light year. But there is no tape to measure the infinite. Not only that there is no end for Kali or Kala; there is no beginning also. It would be an understatement to call them the primal god or the primal goddess.

The human being bows down before the vast and yet aspires to touch it. The mountains are high! Humans get enthralled by the Himalayas and bow down with respect, yet they scale its highest peak. The sea is vaster and deeper. Humans cross seas and oceans and move on their beds.

And the sky! The land and waters of earth are not infinite but, the sky is infinite; without beginning and without end. Humans wander

there too! Not only do they travel through the sky route, they are also moving into space out of curiosity. To respect the vast and infinite, to know it, the curiosity to feel it—all these have led humans to find Kali.

What is the colour of the sky? It is colourless. One knows this by seeing the night sky. During the day, a star named the sun illumines the earth. Trillions and trillions of innumerable stars, planets, and satellites, are born in space in the course of time, and float there. They reveal themselves by their brilliance and also illumine the colourful space. Space scientists and astronomers observe the sky only in the night. It is only then that one can understand sky's true nature. Time encompasses space, Kali also does the same. That is why Kali is worshipped on a new moon day, devoid of moonlight. Even moonlight is an outcast there.

The human beings invented colour amidst this vast colourlessness. They discovered vitality. They discovered vital and colourful Kali. She definitely has vital energy. Else, how



Bhavatarini Kali Temple, Dakshineswar

do innumerable planets and stars take birth in her womb? This incomprehensible progenitress, this ruler of time's flow, this infinitude is Kali. Kali is a great creatrix! There is no end to knowing her; there is no end to the desire for knowing her. This intense human desire for knowledge, this endless curiosity is also her worship.

Human beings are creative. They discovered Kali, at least her form. They have also tried to symbolise her. Whomsoever we love, we consider them to be beautiful. Kali is beautiful. One who gives birth is mother. One who has given birth to me is my mother. That is why Kali has the form of a mother. Children alone are the ornaments of a mother. That is why the planets and stars she gave birth to are all over her body as the crown, bracelet, and necklace. Human beings are also her children. Human beings are the greatest among the living beings. The brain is the greatest asset of the human beings. Those who have the greatest brains among the human beings are great scientists; great sages are the greatest assets of the human beings. We get the wealth of knowledge and education from these children of Mother Kali and this knowledge is carried down the ages by humanity. Humanity identifies the luminous bodies that float in the continuous flow of time in space with these great persons. The ruler of time, Kali, also considers these persons as gems and wears them on her necklace and gives them place in her bosom with love.

Directions are her raiment. That is why she is without clothes. She gives birth to this world and also to this universe. She is constantly giving birth to millions of stars; when can she clothe herself! Then this creation would come to a standstill. Then how is her civilisation protected? By human hands. Human hands create a civilisation and also protect it. These hands encircle Mother Kali's waist, and the protection of civilisation, the covering of clothing is created.

Much happens with time. Yet, time itself is unattached and flows continuously. But, Kali moves and dances playfully on the chest of Kala. Kala silently accepts everything—good and bad. However Kali accepts and also rejects. Though she has two hands to give boons and blessings to her children, she has another pair of hands for accepting and rejecting. Of those two hands, one holds a sword. With this sword she removes that which is unnecessary and is a burden on Kala, much like weeding. And with the other hand she accepts all the gems, the bright stars of knowledge and wisdom, and affectionately wears them as a necklace.

Time moves on; the human civilisation moves on. An era ends and another comes; but human beings have to keep moving on. Human beings have to keep pace with time. That is why human beings worship Kala and want to take care of him always and to do that they keep an hourly chime in their clocks. Every time the clock strikes an hour, it reminds human beings, 'Time is passing, and a bit more has passed'. Nature also has an animal that does this work of striking by the hour—the jackal that keeps time by howling. It howls by the hour and announces the time to the world. It follows in the footsteps of Kali, the ruler of time, the symbol of infinitude, and the great motherhood of God.

One who has no end—how can a discussion about her end? Yet, sometime the discussion might end. Then imagination extends into the infinite. 'Sun gives light.' This sentence of three words is connected with the reality of millions of years of sun giving light. With the words 'Kali' and 'Kala' are also connected 'beginningless' and 'endless'—that which is beyond form and formless; the existence of all that is immeasurable in the present and the future.

Let not the reader stop thinking here ... 

Mandukya Upanishad

Swami Ranganathananda

(Continued from the previous issue)

THE ‘(SCRIPTURAL STATEMENTS regarding) creation as illustrated by examples of earth, iron, sparks, etc., or otherwise, (only) serve the purpose of (ultimately) explaining the unity (of *Jīva* and Brahman). (Really speaking) multiplicity does not exist in any manner.’⁸⁵

‘*Nasti bhedah kathanchana.*’ *Nasti* means never, *bhedah* is separateness, *kathanchana* is any form. No *bhedah* is the truth, non-separateness is the truth. The objection says like common sense: ‘Before creation all this might have been unborn, one and non-dual; but after creation, all this evolved world and the embodied beings (*Jīvas*) denote multiplicity’ (ibid.). It is our common sense point of view.

(Reply): No, it cannot be so. For, the scriptural passages dealing with creation have another meaning. This difficulty raised here has already been solved by the statements that the aggregates (entitites) of body etc., like dream-objects, are produced through illusion of the subject (*Ātman*) and that creation and the differences of the *Jīvas* are like the creation and the differences of the *Ghaṭākāśas*, i.e., the bits of *Ākāśa* ... The (theory of) creation has been described in the scripture through the illustrations of earth, iron, sparks, etc. or otherwise but all these modes of creation are meant for enlightening our intellect so that it may comprehend the identity of *Jīva* and Brahman (ibid.).

This has come from that. So, this is nothing but that. Understand that truth. To stress that, the idea of creation is given. Creation is not a fact, just like causality is not a truth but we do

experience causality. This is our relative state of knowledge. It is just like the story in the Upanishad that the organ of speech and so on, being smitten with evil by the asuras—all these stories are given, these are only to show that this Atman is ever free and these are all illustrative stories.⁸⁶

No story can be taken literally. It is only to illustrate the truth. In all the stories you will see that the lion spoke, did the lion really speak? But the children will never ask that question, they take it for granted that the lion spoke. It is not meant for intellectuals—beautiful story.

‘There are three stages of life corresponding to three—the lower, the middle and the high—powers of comprehension.’⁸⁷ Three powers of comprehension, therefore three stages of life. ‘The Scripture, out of compassion, has taught this devotion (or discipline) for the benefit of those (who are not yet enlightened)’ (ibid.). Higher mathematics you don’t teach a child. You start with ordinary mathematics. Higher mathematics will confuse the child; later on you can give higher mathematics. Start with Euclid; don’t tell the child that Euclid is wrong. Euclid is right for him but later on you say Euclid is wrong; something better you can give.

Ashramas-trividha, three types of understanding. *Ashramas* means ‘those who are competent to follow the disciplines of life as prescribed for the different stages’ (ibid.). All these we call *ashrama*.

This discipline as well as the (various) *Karmas* (works) are prescribed for the *Āśramis* of low

and average intellect, by the *Śruti*, out of compassion, so that they also, following the correct discipline, may attain to the superior knowledge. That this discipline is not for those who possess the right understanding *i.e.*, who are already endowed with the Knowledge of *Ātman* which is one and without a second, is supported by such *Śruti* passages as, 'That which cannot be known by the mind, but by which, they say, the mind is able to think, that alone know to be Brahman, and not that which people here adore' (164–5).

That is not Brahman, Brahman is not an object. For example, image of god like Shiva's image. You want it, no harm. But go beyond all these images. It is only a help to you at this stage. This is not Shiva. This is a symbol of Shiva. Use it, then go beyond to realise the real Shiva. So that is the importance of all these for us. We need it and these are very compassionate. For people who say, 'I can't understand your abstract Brahman', we say, 'Here is Brahman for you; the temple'. Every religion has got a holy place. Very good; let us not deny it, but treat it as a form to go beyond. 'My Brahman is only here'—don't say it throughout. You should be able to see it in your heart. It is a part of all beings. Everything is the *Ātman*. These are all of a disciplinary value. We always go from small to high, lower to higher, higher, and higher—like that it goes on and knowledge progresses.

'The dualists obstinately cling to the conclusions arrived at by their own enquires (as being the truth). So they contradict one another; whereas the Advaitin finds no conflict with them' (166). They conflict among each other, the Advaitins find no conflict in all this. That is an important verse. A Christian Advaitin will find no conflict between Catholic, Protestant, Anglican, etc. But Christian Advaitins never existed. In India we have these Advaitins, therefore they could say, 'Vaishnava, Shaiva, Shakta—very good,

go ahead. We don't find any difference at all'. This is how the Advaitin has no conflict with any one.

This is a very famous verse: '*Svasiddhanta-vyavasthasu dvaitino nishchita dridam*'. The dualists are engaged in establishing the truth of their respective systems. While trying to establish their systems, they contradict other systems and say that they are wrong, this is right. They conflict with each other, first by words, later on by hands also. With all these conflicting systems, this Advaita has no conflict. That is a great utterance. This is what Advaita has done to save India from continuous conflicts of religion; even with the atheists and agnostics. We don't kill atheists or agnostics in India because of this wonderful understanding. How many agnostics were killed in the Western theological tradition! Now today, they are all communists! Everyone is thinking: 'How to kill this communism power?' So much of anti-communism because of these Catholic churches; they are afraid. The individual Christian is not afraid. The churches are afraid.

'The knowledge of the non-dual Self is established by both Scriptures and reasoning. Therefore, it is alone the perfect knowledge. Other views, on account of their being devoid of the bases of Scriptures and reasoning, lead to false systems. The views of the dualists are false on account of this additional reason, that they are the fruitful sources of the vices of attachment and hatred etc' (ibid.). 'My denomination is right, your denomination is wrong'—when they come to your house, they say like that. All these Seventh Day Adventists and others—all of them come to your house and say, 'They are all wrong we are right, come to the right way'. Full of attachment and hatred are reflected in these systems. 'My doxy is doxy, your doxy is orthodoxy'—that is the attitude.

How is this? The dualists following the views of Kapila, Kaṇāda, Buddha and Jina etc., hold

firmly to the conclusion as outlined and formulated by their respective schools. They think that the view they hold is alone the ultimate Reality, whereas other views are not so. Therefore they become attached to their own views and hate others whom they consider to be opposed to them. Thus being overcome with attachment and hatred, they contradict one another, the reason being the adherence to their own convictions as the only truth (ibid.).

‘Jesus is the only begotten son of God’—repeat it twenty times. No argument, nothing: ‘Jesus says so.’ Jesus has never said, ‘I am the only begotten son of God,’ but I will say so. Jesus never said so, he was wiser.

‘But our view, *viz.*, the unity of the *Ātman*, based upon the identity of all, supported by the

Vedas, does not conflict the others who find contradictions among themselves—as one’s limbs such as hands, feet, etc., do not conflict with one another. Hence the purport of the *Śruti* is that the knowledge of oneness of the *Ātman*, as it is free from the blemish of attachment and aversion, is the true knowledge’ (ibid.).

The knowledge that does not contradict that does not lead to conflict, violence, war, tolerance—that alone is true. That is why when the scientists discuss, they do not come to blows but when theologians discuss, they come to blows. They are in search of truth; these are in search of dogmas. Hands and feet—they do not contradict each other. They are all part and parcel. Our teachers say live in the world as the tongue lives in the mouth. Between two rows of teeth,

A Picture of Keshav Chandra Sen’s Nava-vidhan Showing Sri Ramakrishna Pointing Out to Keshav that People of Different Religions Proceed to the Same Goal by Different Paths.



any time that fellow can be crushed, how diplomatically he has to behave here. Tongue is the most diplomatic feature in this body. You bite your own tongue sometimes.

‘A limiting case’ is the phrase that science uses today. Relativity, quantum physics, is the ultimate truth. Classical physics is the limiting case of this relativity physics. This is the language used in scientific books. Similarly here: ‘As non-duality is the ultimate Reality, therefore duality is said to be its effect (*Kārya* or *Bheda*). The dualists perceive duality either way (*i.e.*, both in the Absolute and in the phenomena). Therefore the non-dual position does not conflict with the dualist’s position’ (167). We don’t conflict with you, you conflict with us; we don’t conflict with you.

‘As non-duality is the ultimate Reality, therefore duality or multiplicity is only its effect. The Scriptural passages such as, ‘He is one and without a second’, ‘He created fire’, etc., support this view. It is further borne out by reason as duality is not perceived in the states of swoon, deep sleep or trance (*samadhi*), in the absence of the activity of the mind’ (167–8). If the mind does not function there is no duality. When the mind functions, duality appears. Even time does not function when there is no mind. When the mind moves, time appears; if the mind is quiet, there is no time. Time must have a stop. There is a book by Aldoux Huxley, *Time Must Have A Stop*.⁸⁸

Duality is said to be the effect of non-duality. But the dualists perceive duality alone either way, from both the absolute and relative standpoints. As duality is perceived only by the deluded and non-duality by us who are enlightened, therefore our view does not clash with their views. For, the Scripture also says, ‘Indra (the Supreme Lord) created all these diverse forms through *Māyā*’, ‘There exists nothing like duality’. It is like the case of a man sitting on a spirited elephant, who knows that none can oppose him, but who yet does not drive his

beast upon a lunatic who though standing on the ground shouts at the former, ‘I am also on an elephant, drive your beast on me’. Therefore from the standpoint of Reality, the Knower of Brahman is the very self of (even) the dualists.⁸⁹

The Knower of Brahman sees himself in these dualists. So, he does not oppose, he does not conflict with them, though they come to conflict with him. He won’t conflict because you are my own. The Hindu view of other religions is exactly this: ‘You are our own. We respect your religion.’ ‘No, no, no. We will destroy you, establish only our religion’—this is the situation. The non-dualistic view does not clash with other views.

‘This unborn (changeless, non-dual Brahman) appears to undergo modification only on account of *Māyā* (illusion) and not otherwise. For, if this modification were real, the Immortal (Brahman) would become mortal’ (169). God becomes mortal. Maya appears manifold. ‘The disputants (*i.e.*, the dualists) contend that the ever-unborn (changeless) entity (*Ātman*) undergoes a change. How could an entity which is changeless and immortal partake of the nature of the mortal?’ (170). ‘*Ajato hyamrito bhavo martyatam kathameshyati*.’ Birth means change of nature. An entity cannot be changeless while giving birth to other objects. Hence the theory that *Ātman* somehow changes into the universe is fallacious. ... The immortal cannot become mortal, nor can the mortal ever become immortal. For, it is never possible for a thing to change its nature’ (171).

Water is always water. It is cold. If it is hot, it is because of something else, an adventitious element is brought into it. If that element goes again it will be cold water. A thing cannot change its nature. That is the idea. When you say a thing is this, it is determined by investigation. Then it cannot change its nature. ‘*Prakriteranyathabhavo na kathanchit bhavishyati*.’ When you fix

the nature of a thing, it remains. Say fire, here is a ball of iron. It is cold and black, when you put it in fire. it becomes glowing—all blackness goes, and coldness goes, it becomes burning. But it is adventitious. It is not its nature. After sometimes this goes and it goes back to its own nature. Adventitiously you can change, not otherwise. Similarly, the Atman becomes a jiva. How? Adventitiously, really, it has not changed.

‘How can he, who believes that the naturally immortal entity becomes mortal, maintain that the Immortal, after passing through change, retains its changeless nature?’ (172). How can he hold that? Science says this as the truth of a thing but, you see it otherwise. That otherwise is not true. It is adventitious. ‘The passing into birth may be real or illusory. Both these views are equally mentioned in the *Śruti*. That which is supported by *Śruti* and corroborated by reason, is alone true and not the other’ (173).

‘From such Scriptural passages as, “There is no multiplicity in *Ātman*”, “Indra through *Māyā*”, we know that the *Ātman*, though ever unborn, verily appears to have become many (only) through *Māyā*’ (174). Sense knowledge is illusory. Just like the earth is flat, senses tell you, but investigation tells it is not so. ‘Again, by the negation of creation (*Sambhūti*) the passing into birth is refuted. Causality (in respect of *Ātman*) is denied by such a statement as, “Who can cause it to pass into birth?”’ (176). Upanishads says this. Causality is negated. In the Atman there is no causality. When Heisenberg’s indeterminacy principle came, it was a tremendous evolution. Because, physicists believed: ‘Give me the position of a particular atom in a particular time and the momentum with which it is moving. I can predict the whole future of the universe.’ These are there in Newtonian physics. Quite correct, because it is all determined. Then came Heisenberg who said that nature is such that you will

never know both at the same time precisely. If you know the location, you will not know the momentum. If you know the momentum, you will never know the location. Nature is such, this indeterminacy applies to it. This is the language he used for the principle of indeterminacy. Both are needed to determine the movement of an electron. Large masses you can determine, not in the electron or the individual particle.

When indeterminacy applied to one part, it immediately applied to other parts also. A man has free will. We are not mechanical beings. You can say no, because I told you that the mechanical theory is, action and reaction are equal and opposite. That is mechanical theory, but in the case of man he can vary it. As I said somebody abused me I returned the abuse to him and therefore, it is not exactly that I am abused, I am free. Or I can give no return at all. I can be free without it. So man has freedom to act not exactly according to the sensation that is given to him, but according to his own will. I can say no, when the renunciation comes. That is the meaning of freedom. So, materialism got a jolt in that theory and it is still being worked out on the whole philosophy of man. These all refer to the *Isha Upanishad*’s six verses, verses nine to fourteen; this Sambhuti and all these, they come there.

As the *Śruti* passage, ‘It is not this, not this’, on account of the incomprehensibility of the *Ātman*, negates all (dualistic) ideas described; (as the means for the attainment of *Ātman*), therefore the birthless (*Ātman* alone) exists (and not any duality). ... That which is ever-existent appears to pass into birth through illusion (*Māyā*) and not from the standpoint of Reality. He who thinks that this passing into birth is real asserts, as a matter of fact, that what is born is born again (and so on without end). ... The birthless *Ātman* cannot pass into birth from the standpoint of Reality. But the disputant who holds that the unborn *Ātman*, the

Supreme Reality, is really born in the form of the universe, cannot assert that the *unborn* is born, as this implies a contradiction. In that case he must admit that, in fact, what is (already) born again passes into birth. If, thus, birth is predicated of that which is already born, then the disputant is faced with what is known in logic as *regressus ad infinitum*. Therefore it is established that the Essence which is *Ātman* is ever unborn and non-dual. ... The unreal cannot be born either really or through *Māyā*. For the son of a barren woman is neither in reality nor in illusion. ... As in dream the mind acts through *Māyā* presenting the appearance of duality, so also in the waking state the mind acts, through *Māyā*, presenting the appearance of duality. ... There is no doubt that the mind, which is, in fact, non-dual appears as dual in dream; in like manner undoubtedly that which is non-dual, appears as dual in the waking state also. ... All these dual objects, comprising everything that is movable and immovable, perceived by the mind (are mind alone). For, duality is never experienced when the mind ceases to act (180–8).

‘*Manaso hyamanibhave*,’ when mind ceases to be mind. In Zen Buddhism they use the phrase ‘the theory of no mind’; you find that word, ‘no mind’. These are all similar. When there is no mind, there is no duality, there is no time, there is no space. Mind is there, space is there. ‘*Manaso hyamanibhave dvaitam naivopalabhyate*.’

‘It has been said that it is the mind alone which appears as dual (objects) like the appearance of the snake in the rope. But what is its proof? Our answer is this: we make the statement on the strength of an inference following the method of agreement and difference’ (ibid.). This is inductive logic, agreement and difference. Wherever A occurs, B occurs; wherever A does not occur, B does not occur. Therefore A is the cause of B. It is called the method of agreement and difference. ‘The proposition is that all this

duality perceived as such by the imagination of the mind is, in reality, nothing but the mind’ (ibid.). In whatever we see, we see only ourselves, said Bertrand Russell. When the mind acts, it comes; when mind ceases to act, it vanishes.

‘That is to say, when the (activity, *i.e.*, the *Vṛttis* of the) mind is withdrawn unto itself by the knowledge got through discrimination, repeated practice and renunciation—like the disappearance of the snake in the rope—or during deep sleep [everything goes]. Hence, on account of the disappearance of duality it is established that duality is unreal or illusory. That the perception of duality is due to the action of the mind is further proved in this *Kārika*’ (ibid.).

In Zen Buddhism, there is this constant idea of no mind, the theory of the no mind. Mind ceases to be mind. Zen masters will tell: ‘Kill the mind’. ‘Kill the Buddha’, one disciple was told by the guru. What is Buddha? It is your mind. You have a got a mentation called the Buddha, kill it.

‘When the mind does not imagine on account of the knowledge of the Truth which is the *Ātman*, then it ceases to be mind and becomes free from all idea of cognition, for want of objects to be cognised’ (189). This is a famous utterance.

The pure mind is the same as pure *Ātman*, says Sri Ramakrishna. Pure mind, pure *buddhi*, pure *Ātman*—they are one and the same. ‘*Ātmasatyānubodhena*’—when you realise the truth of the *Ātman*. ‘*Na sankalpyate yada*’—the mind does not get into these modifications. ‘*Amanastam tada yati*’—then it ceases to be mind, you have transcended the mind. When Sri Ramakrishna had Nirvikalpa samadhi, what happened? He had transcended the mind. ‘*Grahyabhava tadagraham*’—when there is no object to cognise, mind becomes no mind. ‘When the mind thus does no longer imagine, it ceases to be mind, that is, the mind, for want

of any object to be cognised, becomes free from all cognition' (ibid.).

Now comes, today's field theory of consciousness. 'The knowledge (*Jñānam*) which is unborn and free from all imaginations is ever inseparable from the knowable. The immutable and birthless Brahman is the sole object of knowledge. The birthless is known by the birthless' (190). Knowledge and the knowable are one if knowledge is free from limitations. Our knowledge is limited. Mental knowledge is always limited. But true knowledge is not limited, it is infinite. '*Akalpa-kamajam jnanam jneyabhinnam prachakshate, brahmajneyam ajam nityam ajenajam vibudhyate.*' This knowledge and the object, both are infinite. Infinite knowledge realises infinite Brahman. '*Ajenajam vibudhyate*'—the birthless is known by the birthless. Birthless cannot be known by the birthful. That is why in India there

is a conception, when you worship any deity, you must become that deity, only then can you worship. You can't understand the deity, when you separate yourself from it. So, in the actual worship there is a ceremony by which you raise your kundalini to the *sahasrara* and realise your oneness with Shiva. Then you start the worship, bring the mind down to the heart, then you worship, you have realised your oneness. Otherwise worship has no meaning. Tantric worship. The birthless is known by the birthless. When your jnana becomes unlimited, then it realises the unlimited Brahman. It is like pouring pure water into pure water, *Katha Upanishad* says.⁹⁰ Pure water poured in pure water is just pure water. So is pure Atman realising pure Brahman. They are one and the same.

'The behaviour of the mind that is under control, *i.e.*, which is free from all imaginations and



that is endowed with discrimination, should be known. The condition of the mind in deep sleep is of another sort and not like that.”⁹¹ The nature of the mind under control should be understood. In this understanding of the Atman, it looks like deep sleep. Mind has no object there. What a world of difference! Here is knowledge. ‘*Sushupte’nyo na tatsamah*’—the state of *sushupti*, where there is perfect non-duality, is different from realisation of non-duality. Knowledge is infinite, Atman is infinite, and this infinite knows the infinite.

‘As the mind is withdrawn at the time of deep sleep and not so in the case of the (*Vedāntic*) discipline, (therefore there is a difference between the condition of the mind of a sleeper and that of a *Jñāni*). That (mind of a *Jñāni*) becomes identical with fearless Brahman whose all-round illumination is consciousness alone’ (193). In deep sleep you don’t have this experience. The glowing consciousness all round. ‘*Jñanalokam samantatah*’—everywhere is jnana. Aloka is light; everywhere the light of knowledge is luminous. Everywhere the darkness of ignorance is *sushupti*. ‘*Tadeva nirbhayam Brahman*’—Brahman is fearlessness; whereas in sleep you have not destroyed fear, when you come out you are again into the world of fear. That means all the wild animals are sleeping at that time; they don’t frighten you. But when you wake up, they also wake up and then the fear comes. Here, you are finished with all dualistic ideas.

‘(This Brahman is) birthless, free from sleep and dream, without name and form, ever-effulgent and omniscient. Nothing has to be done in any way (with respect to Brahman)’ (194). No ritual is necessary. Just realise you are that. Shankaracharya puts it so simply, Swamiji said that religion is very simple, Advaita is very simple. It is a statement. Say, when one says, ‘I am Devadutta’, to know this truth you don’t need

any mediation. It is immediate knowledge. ‘I am Devadutta’ is an immediate knowledge. Similarly, ‘I am Brahman’ is immediate knowledge. You don’t need a ritual; you don’t need a particular torchlight to show this knowledge to you. It is immediate knowledge. Every human being is the Atman that is ever-effulgent.

‘(This *Ātman* is) beyond all expression by words, beyond all acts of mind; (It is) all peace, eternal effulgence, free from activity and fear and attainable by concentrated understanding (of the *Jīva*)’ (197). No talking can express the Atman. That is why those who perceive the Atman control their speech. Least speaking—speech cannot do anything. In the marketplace, speech alone counts. Beyond cognition, conceptualisation—all this is done in Zen. ‘*Suprashantah sakrijiyotih samadhirachalo’bhayah*.’ It is immovable and fearless. This is a state of fearlessness. Scientific knowledge cannot make you completely fearless. Spiritual knowledge can make you fearless.

‘In that Brahman which is free from all acts of mind there is neither any idea of acceptance nor any idea of giving up (of anything). Established in the *Ātman* (Self), knowledge attains to the state of birthlessness and sameness, that is to say, changelessness’ (198). Even knowledge attains that state. Everything is one—there is no acceptance, no rejection. This knowledge is ever-born, ever-dying, limited, finite—that is present knowledge. You take away all limitations of knowledge as you did in the case of the field—particles, objects—these are all limited but the field is unlimited. That is to say, when the knowledge becomes the consciousness field, it becomes changelessness itself.

‘This *Yoga*, which is not in touch with anything, is hard to be attained by all *Yogis* (in general). The *Yogis* are afraid of it, for they see fear in it where there is really fearlessness’ (199). This

yoga is called as *asparsha* yoga, the yoga of non-touch. There is nothing to touch, nothing to relate to, because it's all one. *Sparsha* is touch. The touch of the untouched, it is translated sometimes, that is *asparsha* yoga. There is no second thing that you come in touch with. Everything is the Atman. These Patanjali yogis—all these yogis—it is not easily attained by them. The yogis are afraid of it; they don't go to non-duality. They see fear in that which is fearlessness itself. '*Abhaye bhayadarshinah*'. That which is fearlessness, we are afraid of it. Most of us have this—in all worldly life you find anything that is fearless, we are afraid of it. We want fear. Life cannot go on without fear. When there is fearlessness, we are afraid of it.

Suppose you are alone. You are alone, you are afraid of that. Any worldly mind, to be alone, we are very afraid. Aloneness is the source of fear. People go mad in aloneness. And yet there is strength in being fearless, if you can digest it. Otherwise we want some noise. If everything is quiet, we are afraid. Some noise you should hear. In a village for example, some dogs' bark is enough to make you little bit comfortable. In all silent activity, you might dissolve in fear. So, there is fear and there is fearlessness. People are afraid of fearlessness.

'The *Yogis* (who do not follow the method of *Jñāna-Yoga* as described in the *Kārikā*) depend on the control of their mind for fearlessness, destruction of misery, the knowledge of self and eternal peace' (201). They want to struggle with the mind, but here it is the knowledge of the Atman. Mind dissolves with the knowledge of the Atman. So if you want to control the mind, you have to do it with your heart absorbed in it. 'The mind can be brought under control only by an unrelenting effort like that which is required to empty an ocean, drop by drop, with the help of a (blade of) *Kuśa*-grass' (202). Slowly, slowly,

you have to do. There is a story. Some birds had built their nest near the sea and laid eggs there. They went to look for food, and in the meantime, a wave came and took away the eggs. The birds came and said: 'What! This ocean has destroyed our eggs. Give us the eggs!' To the ocean they appealed. 'We shall dry you up,' they said. They went and put a grass in the beak, took a little water, and put it out in the sand. 'What are you doing?', somebody asked. 'I am going to empty this ocean drop by drop.' But theoretically you can, after all it is a finite quantity. Mind control is like that. '*Utseka udadbeh yadvat kushagrenaikabinduna, manaso nigrastadvad bhaved aparikhedatah*.' Without anxiety, without feeling of defeat, we must continue, continue, and one day, you might control. Like the lion, tiger, tamed by the circus people. The first day, they tame it, it runs away growling. After six months he sits on its back. Slowly, slowly, it is tamed. A little girl sitting on the back of a lion.

'The mind distracted by desires and enjoyments as also the mind enjoying pleasure in oblivion (trance-like condition) should be brought under discipline by the pursuit of proper means. For, the state of oblivion is as harmful as desires' (203).

(To be continued)

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86. See *Chhandogya Upanishad*, 1.2.1–12.
87. *The Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad With Gauḍapāda's Kārikā and Śaṅkara's Commentary*, 164.
88. See Aldous Huxley, *Time Must Have A Stop* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1944).
89. *The Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad With Gauḍapāda's Kārikā and Śaṅkara's Commentary*, 168.
90. See *Katha Upanishad*, 2.1.15.
91. *The Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad With Gauḍapāda's Kārikā and Śaṅkara's Commentary*, 191.

Vedanta Answers

Swami Smaranananda

(Continued from the previous issue)

[Srimat Swami Smarananandaji Maharaj, Vice-President, Ramakrishna Math and Ramakrishna Mission, has been asked various questions regarding various aspects of spiritual life by the young and old alike, over a period of time. This is a collection of such questions and his answers to them—*Editor*.]

QUESTION: How can I get rid of bad thoughts?

Answer: By thinking good, pure thoughts.

Question: I read *Karma Yoga* written by Swami Vivekananda. It is very difficult to understand. Is there any prerequisite knowledge required to understand it?

Answer: No. Swamiji's *Karma Yoga* is not so difficult. Read the second, third, fourth, and fifth chapters of the Bhagavadgita along with Swamiji's *Karma Yoga*, it should be clear.

Question: Swamiji defined freedom as physical, mental, and spiritual freedom. Can you tell what 'spiritual freedom' means?

Answer: To realise that we are not just body and mind. We are the Atman—eternal, pure, awakened, and free—that is spiritual freedom.

Question: How to overcome lower drives in us?

Answer: By cultivating good and pure thoughts.

Question: We are getting knowledge about the Self from elders like you and you may get it from Swamiji, but how was it got the first time?

Answer: Swamiji says that all knowledge is within us. So think deeply to manifest that knowledge, as great scientists do.

Question: Even though you teach about the Self

to all, only some of them understand, feel, and make use of it. Others may think it is not related to them or is something different. Why this difference? Is there anything to propel us to get these divine things?

Answer: You ask 'why this difference?' I say, why not? All are not born with the same abilities. And according to our scriptures, everyone is reborn according to their samskaras, innate tendencies. So, all are not equally interested in these things.

Question: What is meant by happiness?

Answer: You feel happy about certain things and unhappy about some others. A feeling cannot be explained through mathematics. Happiness is the pleasant feeling in your mind.

Question: How is wisdom different from knowledge? Does the wisdom come from genes? Or can we acquire it through practice?

Answer: Wide experience and vast mental horizons make us wise, that is wisdom. 'Knowledge' in the ordinary sense is only objective accumulation of information. Wisdom is the intuitive faculty within. Knowledge in a keener sense means wisdom. Wisdom can be acquired, not through genes.

Question: What is the difference between 'intelligence' and 'intellect'?

Answer: 'Intelligence' helps us understand things spontaneously. 'Intellect' is analytical. It tries to sort out things and understand it from the objective point of view. 'Intelligence' is acquired through the 'intellect'.

Question: When we chant the Gayatri mantra,

we say, 'illumine our intellect'. So does this mean we refer to our intellect for the acquisition of subjective knowledge? What are the ways to get subjective knowledge?

Answer: Our intellects are clouded by partial darkness or ignorance. The Gayatri mantra illumines our intellect, by subjective knowledge. See the Gita: 'That ignorance of theirs becomes destroyed by the knowledge.'³

Question: Why do we need a goal in life?

Answer: The pity is most people do not think of a goal in life. Fixing a goal in life and trying to reach it gives a direction to our life. Otherwise life becomes meaningless.

Question: What is the difference between body, soul, and the Atman?

Answer: Body is matter, changing every moment. It is not conscious. But the soul or the Atman is pure consciousness. It is not matter.

Question: Could you please tell in detail how to know the Self other than 'not to be in grief', 'not be emotionally attached', or 'not be selfish'?

Answer: The Atman or the Self cannot be known as an object, but because of it we know everything. In the ephemeral world everything is known through our mind illumined by the Atman. But how will you know the knower? The Upanishads say: "Through what should one know that owing to which all this is known?"⁴

Question: If everything is within, not without, then what is the process to go inside? What experience, sensation does one feel when one sees the knowledge that is inside?

Answer: Turn your mind within to know the truth. Only a pure mind can experience the Atman. Sri Ramakrishna said that the pure mind and the pure Atman are one and the same.

Question: Why does a person need religion? Can one live a moral life without subscribing to any religion?

Answer: What is your motive for living a

moral life? It should be for attaining a higher goal in life. Otherwise, a person's natural selfishness will conquer oneself. For further explanation, read Swami Vivekananda's lecture 'The Necessity of Religion' in *Jnana Yoga*.

Question: Are not religious fundamentalists doing more harm than anything?

Answer: Religious fundamentalists are, no doubt, doing harm. That is because they are trying to use religion for serving political interests. So, religion should be disassociated from politics.

Question: How can strength of mind or willpower be improved to overcome the obstacle of 'disease'?

Answer: Disease cannot be totally avoided as long as there is the body. But strength of mind can be increased by having a goal to reach and making use of your mental power to attain it by perseverance.

Question: Saints like Swamiji and Acharya Shankara didn't live long. Is that because they see God in everything, even in food? Is that the reason those great saints didn't live long?

Answer: No, your conjecture is not correct. Such great personalities come into this world to fulfil some mission to direct the people to proper goals in life. Once their mission is over, they leave. But, mind you, they do not come to solve all the problems of the world!

Question: What is the role of karma done in past life, in our present life? Can we completely overcome their effects? What is the role of horoscope predictions in this?

Answer: Our present life is shaped by the results of past karma. Their effect cannot be overcome, unless one makes God the goal of life and practices sadhana to attain it. No predictions, horoscopic or otherwise, can be depended upon.

(To be continued)

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3. Gita, 5.16.
4. *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad*, 2.4.14.

TRADITIONAL TALES

Greed That Brought Destruction

LONG AGO LIVED a king named Srinjaya. A daughter was his only child. He was worried that he did not have a son to inherit his kingdom. To find a solution, he invited great Vedic sages, served them, and sought their counsel. Pleased by the king's service, the sages prayed to the divine sage Narada to remove this worry of the king. Narada was also a guest of Srinjaya at that time. Narada was pleased to be requested thus by the sages who had understood the import of the Vedas, and he resolved to remove the king's worry.

Narada asked the king: 'O King! What kind of son do you want?' The king could have asked for an ordinary son but who is free from the clutches of desire? The king became greedy and bowed before Narada and prayed: 'O great sage! If you are willing to bless me with a son, kindly give me a son as I desire. He should be very handsome, healthy, and even his excreta like stool, urine, sputum, and phlegm should be of gold.'

Pondering for only a moment, sage Narada could understand everything and left after having blessed the king thus: 'O King! You will get a son

Chandra (Moon), Narada, Agni (Fire) at Gokarna Mahadev Temple, Kathmandu.




IMAGE: WWW.MOUNTAINSOFTRAVELPHOTOS.COM

just as you wish!’ Accordingly, in due course, a son was born to the king, who experienced inestimable joy and named his son Suvarnashtivi. When the prince cried, tears of gold flowed. All excreta of the prince’s body were in gold. This greatly increased the king’s income and made him very happy. He filled his cellar with gold. He then got all utensils, walls, doors, and all other objects in the palace made of gold. The floors, pillars, ceilings—everything in the palace was of gold. The news of this prince, who excreted gold, spread all across the nation and people came from afar to have a glimpse of the prince.

When robbers came to know of this unique prince, they assembled in a meeting and planned to kidnap the prince using expert robbers. One night, they secretly entered the palace and kidnapped the prince and took him to their hide-out. After the kidnapping of the prince, there was a difference of opinion among the leaders of various robber-gangs regarding the sharing of the prince’s excreta. Further, the robbers learnt that the king had sent great soldiers in all directions in search of his son. It was not possible to keep the prince in the robbers’ custody for

long. Hence, the different gang leaders came to an agreement that the prince had to be killed and the gold that would be taken from his body should be divided equally. Thus, the merciless robbers killed the prince. However, though the prince’s body was cut into two parts, there was not even an iota of gold in his body.

King Srinjaya could not save his son because of the boon he sought out of his greed. He suffered severe pain and agony. Greed led to the prince’s killing by the robbers and they did not get anything. Instead, they only incurred the sin of killing an innocent child and also became the prey of the king’s fury. Thus, due to greed King Srinjaya lost his son and the robbers lost their lives.

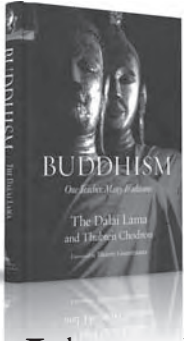
This story that finds place in the Mahabharata, reminds one of the story of the golden goose. A goose used to lay golden eggs daily. Once, the owner of the goose got greedy and thought that if he cut the goose, he could get all the golden eggs all at once and could become very wealthy. However, when he cut the goose, he saw that its stomach was empty and lost the golden egg that it lay daily. These stories remind us that greed leads to destruction. 

Golden Palace



REVIEWS

For review in PRABUDDHA BHARATA,
publishers need to send **two** copies of their latest publications



Buddhism: One Teacher, Many Traditions

Bhikshu Tenzin Gyatso, The
Fourteenth Dalai Lama and
Bhikshuni Thubten Chodron

Wisdom Publications, 199 Elm Street,
Somerville, MA 02144, USA. www.wisdompubs.org. 2014. xviii + 347 pp.
\$ 29.95. HB. ISBN 9781614291275

In her recent book on religion and the history of violence, Karen Armstrong says: ‘The Buddha’s teaching was based on nonviolence. He achieved a state that he called *nibbana*, because the greed and aggression that had limited his humanity had been extinguished like a flame. Later, the Buddha devised a meditation that taught his monks to direct feelings of friendship and affection to the ends of the earth, desiring that *all creatures* be free of pain, and finally freeing themselves of any personal attachment and partiality by loving all sentient beings with “even-mindedness” (*Up-eksha*). Not a single creature was to be excluded from this radius of concern’ (Karen Armstrong, *Fields of Blood: Religion and the History of Violence* (New York: Alfred A Knopf, 2014), 32).

I cited this because this appears in a study which explores recurrent ‘fields of blood’ in all countries, both in the past and especially now when media of all kinds flash every day cases of shocking violence of all varieties; hence, the significance of Buddha’s way of peace and harmony. Even as bloodshed accelerates in almost all corners of the globe, the various spiritual traditions are not just rooted in their own origins. A significant consequence is the spread of, in this context, the Buddhist tradition, and its concerted effort to create ‘many traditions’ embodied in corresponding institutions and their practices, above all, providing authentic aspects of the various traditions, of Buddhism as evident in the very title: *One Teacher, Many Traditions*.

Many traditions, obviously, reflect and require teachers who, rooted in the core of the *original* tradition, find ways of contemporising the origins in ways that extend but do not tamper with the primordial Buddhist way in this context. For us, the great blessing, an authentic source, is the Fourteenth Dalai Lama, Bhikshu Tenzin Gyatso and his associate Bhikshuni Thubten Chodron—and shall we say an exemplar of women’s experience of the tradition? And, the result of their expertise is this invaluable compendium of the theory and practice of global Buddhism today.

With his disarming simplicity and clarity, the venerable Dalai Lama sets ‘the central purpose’ as ‘to learn about each other’. Learning from other traditions, in addition to one’s own, implies what Sri Ramakrishna crystallised in ‘as many faiths, so many paths’. This involves one primary condition which makes this volume precious: identifying and ‘eliminating misperceptions about each other’ running from a long time, even ‘centuries old’ that have been candidly noted in the volume. For instance, some Theravada followers hold that ‘Tibetan monasteries do not follow the *vinaya*—the monastic ethical code and that as practitioners of Tantra they have sex and drink alcohol’. In turn, the Tibetan followers think that the follower of Theravada lacks teachings on love and compassion. The Chinese accused Tibetans of ‘magic’. And Tibetans hold that the Chinese follow mainly ‘blank-minded meditation’ (xviii).

This is, by and large, symptomatic of all traditions. In his foreword, Bhante Gunaratna draws attention to an often bypassed fact: ‘Enthusiasm for the real Dharma is sometimes so strong that the very basic instruction of Buddha on how to teach the Dharma without creating conflict is overlooked.’ Bhikshuni says that the metaphor of ‘The Smile of the Snake’ is apt for this: ‘Grasping the Dharma is compared to the catching a snake by its tail ... a poisonous snake. It can poison the

mind which is more dangerous' (xix). Add the fact that Buddha's mind is overwhelmingly psychological—through its great, enduring aspect.

The present volume is, in those terms, comprehensive. The sixteen chapters cover both the delights and dilemmas of following the path. We begin with a lucid outline of the Buddhist doctrine, its common and diverse aspects followed by 'The Three Jewels', 'The Four Truths', 'Ethical Conduct', 'Concentration', 'Training in Wisdom', 'Selflessness and Emptiness', 'Dependent Arising', 'Serenity and Insight', and among other areas, 'Bodhichitta' and 'Tantra' figure.

What strikes the reader is that not only the contents of the basic canon but also the various inter-related aspects of the tradition are given. They illustrate the basic homogeneity and one among the many traditions. Similarly, there is an effective rejoinder to the mistake of Pali and Sanskrit canons. 'In the past', the authors say, 'due to lack of knowledge people had the impression that the Pali and Sanskrit traditions are completely different and separate. This is a mistake'. And they cite a Sanskrit text: 'The Prajna-paramita Sutras found in the Sanskrit tradition elaborated the core Buddhist teachings practiced by all Buddhists. In these Sutras, the Buddha extensively explained the possibility of completely eliminating ignorance from our mind and gave a comprehensive explanation of the true tradition and true paths' (148–9).

Another aspect which the authors place at the end of the book is tantra. For those who come to Buddhism from Hindu traditions find it surprising that the Buddhist theory and practice can be integrated with tantra or Vajrayana. Perhaps, this is odd, because, Buddhism is concerned with a common element of the human mind. *Dhammapada* identifies it as 'craving'. And tantra calls it *kamana*. In short, both the traditions are concerned with the dynamics of 'desire'.

Verse 339 of the *Dhammapada* says: 'In whom the thirty-six streams of craving that flow towards pleasurable objects are strong—powerful, lustful thoughts carry off that misunderstanding man.' It is this aspect which can hardly be ignored, that has to be faced. And it finds a legitimate place in a chapter, but with a different means of absorbing. 'Buddhist tantra differs from non-Buddhist forms

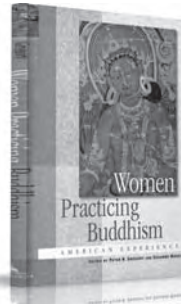
of tantra in that it is conjoined with refuge in the Three Jewels as a foundation and with renunciation, bodhichitta and correct wisdom as the mainstays of the practice' (281). Indeed, Nalanda and Vikramasila masters passed on the system.

That Vajrayana has arrived is evident in the lucid explanations in this volume. A more significant, full length study has now appeared: *The Dalai Lamas On Tantra*, translated and introduced by Glenn H Mulin (New York: Snow Lion, 2006).

Surely, this book, as Bhikṣu Bodhi says, 'will reward those who study it carefully with a deep and wide understanding of the way those traditions have mapped their respective visions of the path to enlightenment'.

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Women Practicing Buddhism— American Experiences

Edited by Peter N Gregory and
Susanne Mrozik

Wisdom Publications, 199 Elm Street,
Somerville, MA 02144, USA. www.wisdompubs.org. 2008. xii + 244 pp.
\$ 16.95. PB. ISBN 970861715398

This is an important book. Not necessarily for Buddhists alone, but as Susanne Mrozik says: 'You do not have to be a Buddhist to engage in Buddhist practice. In fact, you do not have to be even religious. Buddhist forms of meditation are being taught in America today in a variety of secular settings such as medical clinics and prisons. As the essays and conversations in this volume demonstrate, Buddhist practice means many different things to American women' (2).

The context is very congenial for, 'throughout history, Buddhists have repeatedly revised their beliefs and practices to new cultures' (3–4). Therefore, ethnic elements figure but with an odd predicament: 'The so-called "ethnic" and convert Buddhists knew little about each other, including their religious practices' (12–3). What is the resulting 'scenario'?

Since it is American, the book focusses on the corresponding critical idiom and its conclusions—areas from which women see clearly. Though of different ethnic 'stocks', they rely upon American approaches to Buddhism. We are told that 'this book' 'enables us to eavesdrop on the thoughts and conversations of women practitioners who also happen to be artists, scholars, atheists and mothers'. Their 'contemplation includes race, gender, creativity and social issues. That such an effort has been taken is a cause for celebration: racial, gendered, social, etc. matrices explore Buddha and Buddhism. Moreover, there is no Self they say in Buddhism but this does not mean that Buddhists can't talk about it differently'. In short, in the words of Charles Johnson, 'a well-known writer of fiction and non-fiction' for Buddhists 'self is not product but process, not a noun but a verb' (5).

This is roughly the frame of this book. Areas explored range widely: international context and North American Buddhist women, moving beyond gender: Buddhism and creativity, feminist perspectives, power and engaged Buddhism, A Jewish woman and Buddhism, race, ethnicity and class, experiences of Taiwanese Buddhist women, and growing up Buddhist.

Rich research and authenticity mark the volume. But, then, the question is 'what happens when women show up at Buddhists temples and dharma centers'? There is surely a good opportunity: primarily, 'the transplantation of Buddhism in America gives all Buddhists a chance to think carefully about the kinds of institutions' women want to create in the US. Institutionalising seems ingrained in the West on a colossal scale: everything from business to Buddhism.

A more puzzling question is raised by the volume: Can any religious experience be attributed to or conditioned by ethnic factors? Taiwanese American, Jewish American, and so on. Are we getting enmeshed in factors which need transcendence to understand spiritual experience? Do we call Buddha an Indian product? The ethnic factor is so persisting that the volume narrates an incident which is startling in its shock!

When Karma Lekshe Tosmo announced 'Mummy I'm a Buddhist', the mother 'was

horrified of course because according to her belief system that doomed me to eternal hell-fire. This was the beginning of my own personal experience of interfaith dialogue' (16). But is adopting another faith cessation of innate genetic features? How strong the roots are, in spite of conversion, is seen in an interesting confession: this occurs in the section on Dharma Teachers Forum. Thubten Chodran got inspired by H H The Dalai Lama's suggestion that they should 'organise conferences introducing the Bhikṣuni Lineage into the Tibetan tradition as well as into other Buddhist traditions'. Chodran lived in India and Nepal for many years. But she says 'it was only when I returned to the US in the early 1990s that I realized the extent to which my self-confidence as a woman and as a westerner has eroded. Going back to the west allowed me to re-establish my self-confidence and to discover that as a female monastic I could benefit others by preaching and teaching the Dharma in a western culture' (23–4).

To me, the most fruitful narrative seems to be 'A Jewish Woman and Buddhism'. She made her way to America to realise her ideal of 'becoming' a Buddhist. if one could put it so simply. 'But the paradox was more about working for life than "living a life of connection to spirit". Concepts like "spiritual life", "self-realization", or sacred community were as foreign to me as Latin and Greek.' She confesses to a mind as 'a pandemonium' and 'frightened of stillness'.

Few confess to such realities which are, surely, integral to *sadhana*. From 'a sea of chaos and desire' and trying to be 'afloat' on it (128). Yet, tranquillity came out of turmoil and the most striking experience was: 'I realized that the teachings called dharma at these retreats were nothing other than the teachings of Torah, teachings leading me towards sacred community and healing', in short achieving the truth that dharma 'could be practiced and integrated into sacred, the deep revelation'. What one can infer from this is, what Swami Vivekananda asserted for interreligious harmony. 'Each must grow according to one's own laws of growth' (129).

In fact, Sheila Peltz Weinberg, this 'feminist' Rabbi, found another dimension as possible: 'I think my willingness to see the connection

between dharma and Judaism is connected to my life as a feminist and a woman in a public religious role' (139). One is reminded that this facet is surely making its mark. Writers like Luce Irigaray are writing about what they call *In the Beginning She Was*.

A comparable case is that of Arlene, a Taiwanese woman opting for Buddhism. She confesses that the US life clashes with the traditional. In fact, Taiwanese women 'comparing their own situation to those of Anglo-American women remark with envy the freedom between American men and women'.

A review of this sort aspires to be comprehensive but fails miserably. In any case one thing is certain. The feminist 'invasion' of the spiritual field is a phenomenon which signals what a *Parabola* issue names as the 'Divine Feminine'. It is a renewal, in a sense of shakti, power.

Prof. M Sivaramkrishna

practices, their conceptions of God, their modes of worship, and their tenets and gospels.

In the first part on Hinduism, the unique features of its beginningless origin, the absence of any single founder, and the remarkable flexibility in the modes of worship of its multiple gods and goddesses are mentioned. Hinduism is portrayed as a hybrid of polytheism and monotheism—polytheism in its lower planes of approach to the Divine and monotheism in its ultimate conception of the Divine. One of the hallmarks of Hinduism is shown to be its stern repugnance to the practice of religious conversion.

The second part on Buddhism shows it as neither polytheistic nor monotheistic but essentially atheistic as there is no place for the datum of God in its philosophy. The sermon of the four noble truths and the eightfold path are explained.

The third part on Christianity and Judaism reveals that the Christianity is the offspring of Judaism. Both Judaism and Christianity are rigidly monotheistic and opposed to the practice of idol-worship. The contents of the Old Testament and the New Testament are briefly discussed. The spiritual mission and services of many apostles including St Paul, the formulator of multi-racial Christianity, are dealt with.

The fourth part on Islam, besides briefly recounting the life-story of Mohammed, the Prophet, turns the spotlight on the teachings of Koran, the seminal scripture of Islam and the religious duties of the Muslims, the five pillars.

This exciting swing through the fascinating landscape of the five major religions is followed by the climax of the enunciation of the theory of 'Two Forms of any Religion' by the author. The author distinguishes between two forms of religion, 'the born-to religion' and 'the awakened-to religion'. People are generally 'born' into a particular religion and inherit the patrimony of its framework of creed and customs, predilections and prejudices, and passions and purposes. It is the blind observance of the 'born-to religion' that queers the pitch and triggers the mindset of acrimony and rancour. If a person born willy-nilly into a religion is 'awakened' to the eternal 'inner-spirit' of its lofty message or that of any other religion, that religion becomes his 'awakened-to'



**Main Religions of
the Modern World and the
Two Forms of Any Religion**
Antony Fernando

Intercultural Book Promoters, 21G4,
Peremuna Mawatha, Eldeniya, Kada-
watha, Sri Lanka. 2015. viii + 168 pp. \$
10.00. PB. ISBN 9789559036432

The book under review, a useful compendium of comparative study of the five main religions of the modern world, Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, is a timely arrival. This book is divided into five parts, each consisting of a few chapters. The first four parts deal with the four major religions of Hinduism, Buddhism, Christianity, Judaism, and Islam in that order and the fifth and final part titled 'Two Forms of any Religion' makes a refreshingly novel and original contribution to the philosophy of religions, calculated to lessen interreligious strife and promote interreligious understanding, amity, and respect.

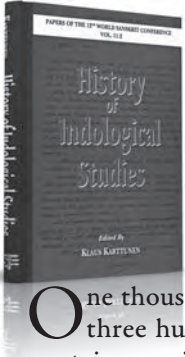
The individual parts on the different religions spell out their salient features in the domains of their founders' life-sketches, their metaphysics, their scriptural treasures, their ritualistic

religion which is always a force for happiness, harmony, and peace. The willing practice of the 'awakened-to' religion gives rise to the wholesome sense of toleration. It is this truth of the eternal validity of all religions—if truly and rightly lived in a spirit of 'awakening'—that Sri Ramakrishna proved in his epic life by his unprecedented experiments with diverse religions and sects.

This small book is a treasure in which bushels of precious wisdom are encapsulated and a must-read for all who care about religious harmony and peace.

N Hariharan

Madurai



History of Indological Studies

Edited by Klaus Karttunen

Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, 41
U A Bungalow Road, Jawahar Nagar,
New Delhi 110 007. 2015. xii + 264
pp. ₹ 1000. HB. ISBN 9788120839946

One thousand rupees for a book of less than three hundred pages? But then, the book contains precious material that injects a tremendous amount of self-confidence into an Indian's psyche. The very first essay by Enrica Garzilli brings to us a Sanskrit letter written by Sylvain Levi to the Rajguru of Nepal on 29 March 1924: 'Shri: Hey subhrudshreshtha!' opens the epistle which is a request for *Vimshatikabhashya*, for Levi was planning to bring out a French translation of the Buddhist work. Not the letter alone, but the entire essay is devoted to the Rajguru Hem Raj who was a great scholar, published several important books in the press he had set up in his house, had a huge library, and was generous and helpful to foreign scholars.

The volume itself contains a few papers of the twelfth World Sanskrit Conference held in Helsinki in July 2003. The detailed introduction by Klaus Karttunen gives a good idea of the history of Western Indology which was given a boost by catholic missionaries working in India. Karttunen's more detailed 'The Beginnings of Indology in India' marks a departure from the usual format by giving plentiful information about the help rendered by Indian pandits and the tremendous work they did in subjects like

epigraphy, astronomy, and literature. Ramachandra Vidyabhushana even collaborated with William Hodge Mill in composing the Christian Purana, *Khristugita*. We learn that the infamous policy of Macaulay ordered the scholarly books published with the help of public funds till then 'to be sold as waste paper'. Fortunately, there were some sane foreign scholars who did not reject the received wisdom of India nor did they look down upon the scholarly pandits who were the backbone of Indological research from its early days.

Together with Karttunen, other scholars like Sergei D Serebriany, Yuriy Zavhorodny, and Kenneth G Zysk give plenty of inputs regarding Indological studies in Sweden, Russia, Ukraine, and Denmark. Page after page yields important and interesting information. Thus, contrary to the general belief of brahmins categorically refusing to teach Sanskrit to foreigners, they welcomed the interest shown by a foreigner; nor was there any persecution of the teachers. Indeed a committee of pandits compiled most of the Sanskrit-English dictionary, now known as Wilson's dictionary, which would become a kind of sourcebook for Monier Williams and Apte.

In spite of its two millennia history, Tamil was somewhat late in entering Indology and even then there was some lack of clarity to the foreigner. The Swedish scholar Ekenstam 'confused it [Sanskrit] with Tamil, which he knew from Ziegenbalg, and then proceeded to compare them both to Chinese'. However, this was a rare case. 'The Succession of Generations in Russian Sanskrit Studies' is a remarkable study and we can only shed tears when reading how the Stalin era and even the 'thaw' blighted Indological scholars in a big way and many of them perished or emigrated or committed suicide. Among the interesting sidelights is the Soviet Indologist Aleksey Baranikov turning against 'dead' Sanskrit and establishing Hindi studies at Leningrad University.

Not only does this book contain rich matter, but it also comes with sumptuous bibliographies which will prove to be a scholar's delight.

Prema Nandakumar

Researcher and Literary Critic

Srirangam

MANANA

**Exploring thought-currents from around the world.
Extracts from a thought-provoking book every month.**

***The Devil Wins:
A History of Lying from the Garden Of Eden
to the Enlightenment***

Dallas G Denery II

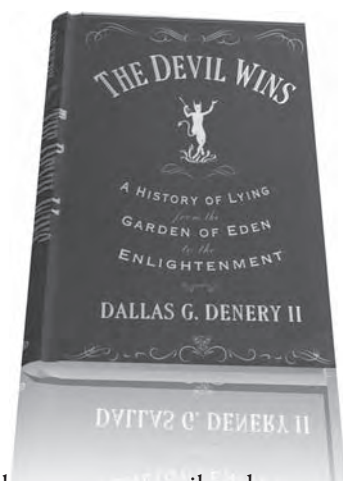
Princeton University Press, 41 William Street, Princeton, New Jersey 08540. 2015. xi + 331 pp. \$29.95. PB. ISBN 9780691173757.

Is It Ever Acceptable to Lie?

THIS IS A BOOK ABOUT the history of lying from the Garden of Eden to the Enlightenment. With one notable exception, it is not a history of specific lies, of who said what to whom, but a history of responses to a very fundamental, if straightforward, question: *Is it ever acceptable to lie?* A perennial question, one that remains with us to this day, it no longer means for us what it meant for people who lived during the Middle Ages, the Renaissance, and the Reformation. Contemporary behavioral psychologists and evolutionary biologists tell us that deception is woven into the very fabric of nature. Plants have evolved to look like insects and insects to look like plants. The bolas spider can emit a scent so similar to that of a female moth that it lures males to their death. For their part, different sorts of baboons, gorillas, and chimpanzees engage in what can best be described as intentional acts of deception, purposefully leading their fellows away from banana-laden trees only to scurry back unseen to gorge themselves, alone and in peace. We humans are little different, and evolution seems to have favored those of us who deceive better than others. If we don't lie constantly, we certainly lie frequently. One study suggests that during every ten minutes of conversation, we lie three times and even more

frequently when we use e-mail and text messaging. Contemporary philosophers may debate whether it is ethical to lie, whether the standards and expectations of human society and conduct allow for or prohibit dishonesty, but these debates simply assume that lying is one of many questionable things we do.

No one living before the eighteenth century would ever have claimed that our penchant for lying was simply natural. Scripture may have famously proclaimed 'Every man is a liar', but that was an observation rooted in much more than mere empirical analysis. Near the beginning of his meditative treatise *On Humility and Pride*, Bernard of Clairvaux, perhaps the most famous religious figure of the twelfth century, writes that we can understand what it means to be a liar only if we humble and humiliate ourselves before God's truth and in that humiliation experience how wretched we really are. Reflecting on the book of Psalms, Bernard writes: 'The prophet has humbled himself [...] as he says in another Psalm, "And in your truth you have humbled me." He has been thinking about himself. Now he looks from his own wretchedness to that of others, and so passes to the second step, saying in his ecstasy, "Every man is a liar." But what does it mean to say 'Every man is a liar?' it means, Bernard continues, that 'every man is weak, powerless, unable



to save himself or others.' It means that anyone 'who trusts his own strength deceives himself ... [for] ... he cannot hope for salvation from himself, nor can anyone else hope for salvation from him.' To assert that every man is a liar is to say something profound about who we are and how we got to be this way, about our relationship to God and ourselves, to those around us and to the world itself. Every man is a liar because every man is fallen, cast out of paradise, full of pride and utterly at God's mercy.

While Bernard's deeply monastic and religiously severe assessment of human depravity and helplessness may have been more extreme than those of his nonreligious peers, Christian writers from the earliest days of the Church to the seventeenth-century writings of Blaise Pascal, John Milton, and beyond would have agreed with him that the problem of the lie, of lying, was the problem of human existence itself. Its roots dug deep into the ground of ontology, metaphysics, and theology, and reached as far back as the very first moments of human history, a history blasphemed into existence beneath a tree in a garden, in the serpent's lying words to a woman who would soon be named Eve. For this tradition, human history, the history of fallen man, began with the serpent's lie, and that lie shaped and marked us, deformed and weakened us. It transformed us into sons of the Devil, liars and sinners both, even as it entangled us ever more tightly in the misery of a life lived in exile from the earthly paradise that God had created for us. Given this history, with all it entailed, the question *Is it ever acceptable to lie?* was always more than a question about acceptable or unacceptable behavior.

No doubt some readers will be surprised that certain topics or writers are barely discussed or not discussed at all. There is nothing on politics and lying, on Renaissance debates about 'the

reason of state', nor anything about the truth status of fiction and history. In response, I can only point out that the history of lying is immense, and no book could provide anything approaching a comprehensive account of it. Hopefully the book itself, its aims and logic, will justify what is included and what has been quietly passed over. This is a book about the problem of lying as it appeared to people from the fourth until the eighteenth century, that is, as a problem deeply connected to the tragic events in the Garden of Eden and how, finally, it became possible to imagine it as a problem having nothing to do with those events. In other words, it is a book about how the problem of lying became our problem, the problem as we know it today. As the same time, it is a book that hopes to upset a popular narrative that contrasts the medieval and the early modern in terms of diametrically opposed attitudes about lying and the easy contrasts that flow from that opposition. In order to accomplish these joint goals, this book examines the historical response to one question from a variety of perspectives, the theological and the secular, the uncreated and the created, the masculine and the feminine, revealing, if not the total diversity of opinions, a much greater diversity than historians have previously recognized. No doubt other perspectives could have been included, but it is difficult to imagine this history without these five perspectives, and certainly these five seem adequate to fulfill this book's goals. Augustine may have had some sympathy for the predicament of having more to say than one should or has the time to say. 'Hence it is not a lie when truth is passed over in silence,' he writes in his early fifth-century treatise *Against Lying*, 'but when falsehood is brought forth in speech.' And hopefully, if it is not a lie to pass over the truth in silence, neither will it be misleading, at least in what follows.



REPORTS

News of Branch Centres

As a part of its year-long centenary celebration, **Ramakrishna Math, Chandipur** conducted cultural programmes on 17 and 19 April and 8 May 2016. Also, a doctors' conference was held on 14 June in which 155 doctors took part.

Sri Keshari Nath Tripathi, Governor of West Bengal, visited **Ramakrishna Mission Nivedita Educational and Cultural Centre, Darjeeling** on 6 June.

Ramakrishna Mission Ashrama, Guwahati conducted a free medical camp during Ambuvachi Mela near Kamakhya Temple from 22 to 25 June in which 4,250 patients were treated.

Swami Suhitananda, General Secretary, Ramakrishna Math and Ramakrishna Mission, inaugurated the school building at **Ramakrishna Mission Sevashrama, Kozhikode** on 4 June.

Swami Suhitananda formally inaugurated the new Math centre at **Ramanathapuram** on 26 June in the presence of Swami Gautamananda, Adhyaksha, Ramakrishna Math, Chennai, and a number of other monks and devotees.

Sri Pinarayi Vijayan, chief minister of Kerala, inaugurated Vivekananda Institute of Human Excellence and National Integration at **Ramakrishna Ashrama, Thiruvananthapuram** on 28 June, in the presence of many dignitaries.

Celebration of the 150th Birth Anniversary of Sister Nivedita

Chandigarh centre held a special lecture programme on 12 June attended by about 150 devotees.

Rajamahendravaram (Rajahmundry) centre conducted a youth convention on 11 June in which about 700 students took part.

Swamiji's Ancestral House and Cultural Centre held four lectures at the centre from 23

May to 17 June which were attended altogether by 1,200 people. On the centre's initiative, four public meetings were held in and around Kolkata from 2 May to 4 June. In all, about 1,250 people attended the programmes.

Swachchha Bharat Abhiyan (Clean India Campaign)

Kamarpukur centre conducted its sixth cleanliness drive on 22 May in which 67 people, including monks, employees, and volunteers, cleaned a market area and a few streets of Kamarpukur.

Mangaluru centre conducted four cleanliness drives in different areas of Mangaluru city in the month of May involving about 500 people.

Nagpur centre took out a rally in Dhantoli area on 6 April to create awareness about cleanliness. About 200 people, mostly children, took part in the rally. As a part of the rally, the children enacted a street play.

Values Education and Youth-related Programmes Conducted by Centres in India

Delhi centre conducted eight values education workshops for school principals and teachers from 3 to 25 May which were attended by 420 people in all.

Rajkot Ashrama held 19 values education programmes for school children from 4 January to 29 March. In all, 3,758 students from 19 schools took part in these programmes. The centre also conducted two two-day residential camps for the youth in January and February in which 100 students from 2 colleges participated.

Silchar centre conducted a two-day values orientation programme on 24 and 25 May attended by 208 students and 60 teachers from 35 schools.

Relief

Distress Relief: The following centres distributed various items, as shown against their names, to needy people: (a) **Bankura:** 269 shirts, 276 T-shirts, and 279 pants from 6 April to 10 June. (b) **Chandipur:** 100 saris, 23 shirts, and 23 pants on 18 April. (c) **Chapra:** 1,998 shirts, 991 pants, and 1,216 sweaters from 1 March to 28 May. (d) **Coimbatore Mission:** 2,120 shirts, 2,232 T-shirts, and 2,158 pants from 24 March to 12 June. (e) **Darjeeling:** 9,969 shirts, 17,468 tops, 13,815 pants, 1,429 women's garments, 275 leggings, 1,096 skirts, and 1,296 tunics from 7 March to 21 June. (f) **Guwahati:** 500 T-shirts and 1,000 tops from March to June. (g) **Halusuru (Ulsoor):** 55,000 notebooks and 10,413 sets of stationery items—each set containing a pencil, an eraser, and a sharpener—from 9 to 23 June. (h) **Ichapur:** 25,268 shirts and 11,624 pants from 25 March to 24 June. (i) **Jayrambati:** 3,098 shirts, 910 T-shirts, and 4,010 pants from 24 April to 16 May. (j) **Kankurgachhi, Kolkata:** 995 shirts, 1,005 pants, 573 saris, and 166 dhotis from 24 May to 3 June. (k) **Kanpur:** 516 shirts, 496 T-shirts, 504 pants, 523 sweaters, and 507 jackets from 1 to 10 May. (l) **Katihar:** 200 shirts, 100 pants, and 200 sweaters from 26 February to 24 March. (m) **Lalgarh:** 2,227 shirts, 1,628 T-shirts, and 1,882 pants from 29 April to 18 June. (n) **Mekhliganj:** 201 shirts, 201 pants, and 207 T-shirts on 22 and 23 May. (o) **Naora:** 458 books among 129 students on 14 April and 7 June. (p) **Narottam Nagar:** 100 T-shirts, 472 tops, 194 pants, 196 shirts, and 50 umbrellas from 8 to 28 June. (q) **Raipur:** 1,086 shirts, 484 pants, and 497 sweatshirts from 13 April to 24 May. (r) **Rajamahendravaram:** 100 saris, 100 dhotis, 100 towels, 120 notebooks, 60 tubes of toothpaste, 60 toothbrushes, and 60 bars of bathing soap on 12 June. (s) **Ranchi Morabadi:** 3,084 shirts, 3,105 T-shirts, and 3,085 pants from 9 March to 31 May. (t) **Silchar:** 2,200 tops, 824 pants, 546 dhotis, 25 saris, 101 chaddars, 1,410 mosquito-nets, 6,550 exercise books, 1,562 geometry boxes, 1,945 pens, 1,945 pencils, 725 sharpeners, 725 erasers and 11,218 packets of biscuits from 8 March to 21 May. (u) **Tamluk:** 1,506 shirts, 2,298 pants, and 187 T-shirts from 27 April to 15 May. (v) **Vrindaban:** 1,509 shirts, 1,607 T-shirts, 3,011 pants, 1,005


blazers, 3,161 sweatshirts, 411 coats, and 123 jackets from 26 March to 8 June.

Drought Rehabilitation: Telangana: Hyderabad centre installed a water purification plant (reverse osmosis) at Gajulaguda village in Ranga Reddy district to provide safe drinking water to the villagers. The plant was inaugurated on 10 June.

Storm Relief: West Bengal: In the wake of a severe storm, **Ramharipur** centre distributed 186 asbestos sheets, 155 tin sheets, 60 tin matkas, 500 tile matkas, 4,000 roof tiles, 33 polythene sheets, and 26 kahans (sheaves) of hay among 58 affected families of 14 villages in Bankura district from 12 to 18 June.

Summer Relief: The following centres distributed buttermilk and drinking water among thirsty wayfarers: (a) **Tamil Nadu: Salem:** 16,360 litres of buttermilk among 27,266 persons in April and May. (b) **West Bengal: Sargachhi:** 1,000 litres of drinking water and wafers (*batasha*) among 1,572 persons from 1 to 16 May.

Winter Relief: The following centres distributed various items among poor and needy people: (a) **Darjeeling:** 1,610 jackets, 53 mufflers, 4,264 sweaters, 1,069 flat knits, 2,377 blazers, 3,083 suits, and 1,512 sweatshirts from 7 March to 21 June. (b) **Narottam Nagar:** 200 sweaters and 200 sweatshirts from 8 to 28 June.

Flood Rehabilitation: Tamil Nadu: (a) **Chennai Math** constructed Swami Vivekananda Community Hall and Educational Centre and 60 low-cost houses at Meliruppu Panchayat area in Cuddalore district which had been affected by floods in November 2015. Swami Suhitananda declared open the building and handed over the houses to 60 flood-affected families on 28 June. Each family was also given a stove and an LPG cylinder. (b) On 29 June, Swami Suhitananda laid the foundation stone for the proposed 'Sister Nivedita Community Hall' to be constructed by **Chennai Student's Home** at Thathaimanji village in Thiruvallur district. On the same day, this settlement of Irula tribals, where the centre had earlier built 19 low-cost houses and 13 additional toilets, was renamed 'Vivekanandapuram'. Moreover, the centre has undertaken construction of 78 low-cost houses in nearby villages for flood victims. 



PRABUDDHA BHARATA

or AWAKENED INDIA

A monthly journal of the Ramakrishna Order
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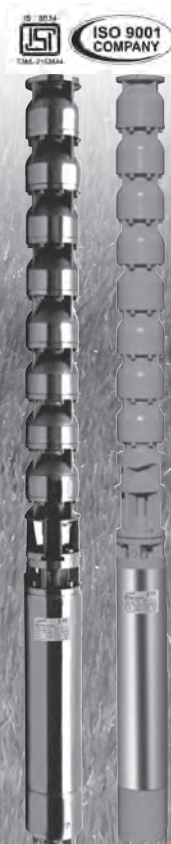
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The Universal Temple of Bhagwan Shri Ramakrishna (Under Construction) An earnest Appeal for generous donations

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— Swami Vivekananda



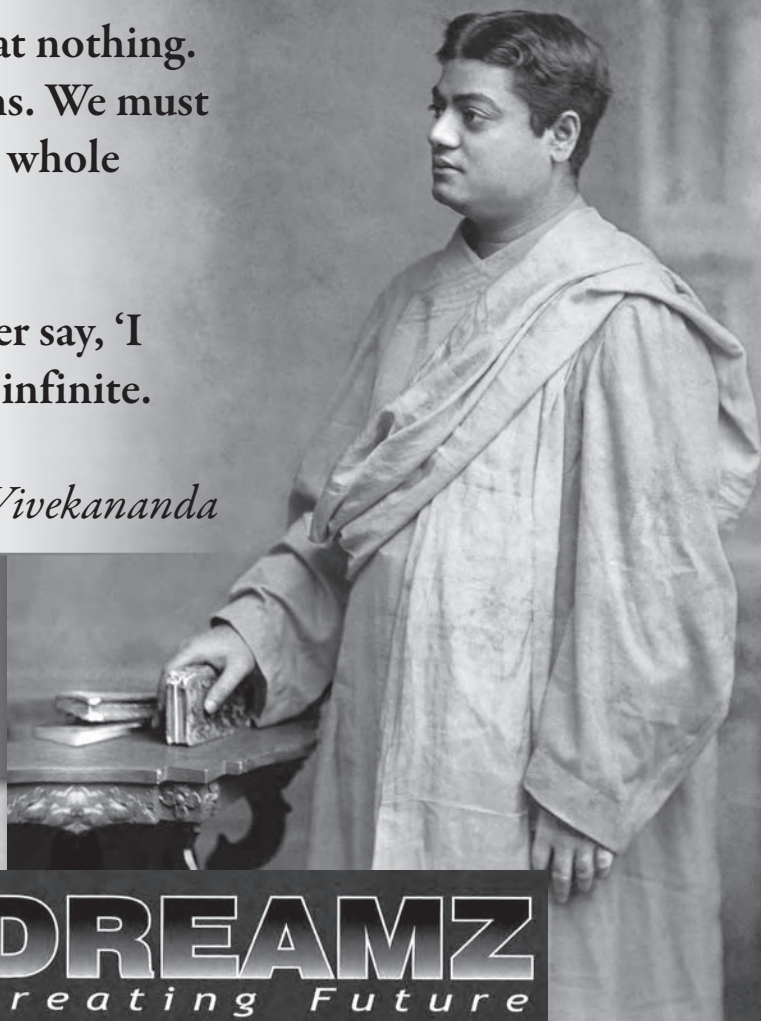
Each soul is potentially divine.
The goal is to manifest this
Divinity within.

Strength is life, weakness is
death.

Fear nothing, stop at nothing.
You will be like lions. We must
rouse India and the whole
world.

Never say, 'No', never say, 'I
cannot', for you are infinite.

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you, have nothing to do with it.

—Swami Vivekananda

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